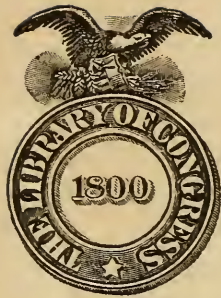


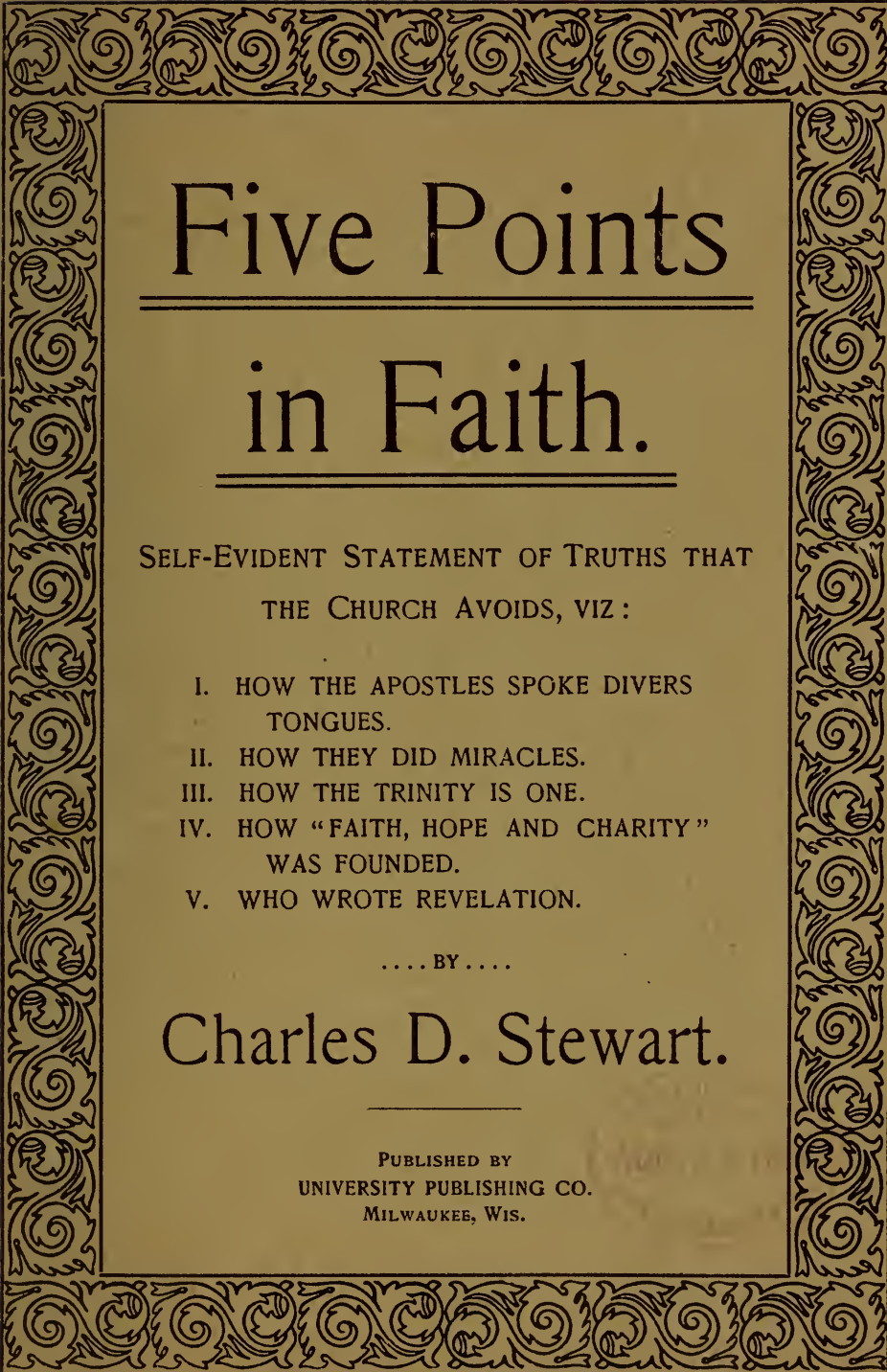
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Five Points

in Faith.

SELF-EVIDENT STATEMENT OF TRUTHS THAT
THE CHURCH AVOIDS, VIZ :

- I. HOW THE APOSTLES SPOKE DIVERS
TONGUES.
- II. HOW THEY DID MIRACLES.
- III. HOW THE TRINITY IS ONE.
- IV. HOW "FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY"
WAS FOUNDED.
- V. WHO WROTE REVELATION.

.... BY

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PREFACE.

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“I shall speak plainly, because I feel strongly. I will give voice to what many others feel, yet are still timid to utter—that trick and smartness are now striving to push old honesty out of the field of business.

* * * * *

A merely passive virtue is scarcely a virtue at all. The young man who knows himself to be true, honorable, capable, dare not simply *possess* these qualities. All the greater is the duty laid upon him to manifest them actively in every possible form, and to conquer, so far as he may, whatever deceit, dishonor, or ignorant prejudice lies nearest to his path of life. The strength of each of you, if thus exercised, is greater than the proudest among you has ever reckoned. The strength of all of us combined, exerted against the evils we see, will jar their foundations, though they seem ever so firm.

It is nearly useless to attempt to create a spirit which does not already exist. Unless you are waiting for some such utterances as these, I am speaking to the air.”

—Henry Wickham, of Richmond, Va.

I.

HOW THEY SPOKE DIVERS LANGUAGES.

You are probably familiar with the belief that the apostles spoke in divers tongues.

The Bible tells us that after the Holy Ghost descended upon their heads in tongues of fire, they went forth on the streets of Jerusalem and astonished the people by speaking many languages.

In the second chapter of Acts we read : “ Now when this was noised abroad the multitude came together and were confounded because that every man heard them speak in his own language, and they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another : Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans ? And now hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born. Parthians and Medes and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judea and Cappadocia in Pontus and in Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia in Egypt and in parts of Libya about Cyrene and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed and in doubt, saying one to another : What meaneth this ?

Others mocking said : These men are full of new wine."

It is a familiar story.

Thousands of preachers, graduates in theology, bible history and church government, from hundreds of orthodox colleges, have taught it to men and women and drawn a million morals on mockery and unbelief. Thousands of pastors have searched the Bible to tell their text in all its bearings until it would seem there was not much more to be discovered. Only this question remains—what did this speaking in divers languages consist of ?

This simple question they overlook.

Between the time the apostles spoke in divers tongues and the time the book of Acts was written, about thirty years, the churches mentioned in the bible were founded. By closely reading one of Paul's letters to the Corinthian churches, we are enabled to get some light on speaking divers languages. The facts are so truly ridiculous when fully realized that they are unbelievable unless we have a previous knowledge of the depth of superstitious ignorance of the Corinthian Christians in whom Paul founded his doctrines. St. Paul's epistle is a letter, a prominent point of which was, that they should commence putting their savings away regularly so that when he came at the end of a year he would not have to collect. It was one of his repeated doctrines that an apostle should not solicit money. He always arranged matters so that they would be prepared to give it to him. He told them the reason he gave notice a year ahead was that he would thereby be spared from troubling with such matters when he came. This epistle of I. Cor. also gives them advice on conducting themselves as members of the church.

It appears, according to Paul's remarks, that the Corinthians were depraved, as well as lewd, and St. Paul directs them with regard to regulating the Lord's supper. They were in the habit of having a Lord's supper every time they met. Each one struggled to get the most. In telling them not to continue this habit, Paul says; I. Cor. 11:20-21: "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper, for in eating every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken." This sentence would certainly argue to a casual bible reader that the Corinthians were depraved. I do not quote it with this idea. It is a question whether they were depraved or hungry, and what the real reason might be. We cannot come hastily to correct conclusions in reading the Bible. Paul's intimation certainly is that they were depraved, but as this book is dealing only with certain facts for the purpose of arriving at truth, I will not call this depravity until the circumstances are discovered in the light of fact.

Taken however in connection with what follows, it is evident that the Corinthians were densely ignorant. And this is a mild way of observing that Paul, a graduate of the college of Tarsus, took advantage by playing on their superstition and vanity. After he explains to them the proper manner of partaking of the Lord's supper, he quotes Christ's remarks on the memorial meal and says: "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." The keyword of vantage in this sentence, according to Paul, is the word "death," for he adds, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of

the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself and so let him eat that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep."

It is safe to say that after this revelation the Corinthians either got something to eat without taxing the church funds or went hungry. Those who were weak and sickly among them, who had chronic rheumatism or hereditary eczema or weak ankles or strabismus, knew at last what caused it. And there must have been reminiscences of dead relatives who had "gone to sleep." The Lord's supper must have been an awful ceremony after that. It is no wonder in the light of such methods that when St. Paul sent his young man Titus to them, he had occasion to write and say how he rejoiced to hear they received him with "fear and trembling." It might seem strange, however, that the same brand of church wine that made the Corinthians weak and sickly was supposed to be good for Timothy's dyspepsia, for when St. Paul made him bishop of Ephesus, he told him to "drink no longer water" but "take a little wine for thy stomach's sake." It might seem strange that St. Paul should add the qualification a "little wine" after he said to "drink no longer water." Possibly it was necessary for Timothy to go thirsty for his soul's sake. We cannot really understand these deep things, but it is incumbent upon us to put the best interpretation on them. It is evident that St. Paul saw that if he did not get up the doctrine of the real presence the congregation would be drinking up all of Timothy's medicine.

There is one thing, however, given us to understand, and that is, the cause of the different action of this medicine. It all depended upon the circumstances under which it was taken and the occasional inability for "discerning the Lord's body" on the part of the parish. Is it any wonder that the modern church founding its eternal doctrine on this inspiration of Paul's, should not allow the members to take communion themselves? They might in a spell of absent-mindedness imagine it to be only wine and a wafer. So the priest takes all the risk of disease and damnation; a happy improvement. The church, it is plain, has changed. Originally they lived in community of goods and the church dealt out, each day, enough for individual wants. There is no evidence that this was entirely in force among Paul's converts. They had separate homes, but the church hinted for the surplus and effected the same result. And when it came to keeping those who were out of work, St. Paul himself originated the remark that those who did not work could not eat. There is no doubt that if failure to discern the real presence resulted in bodily ailment, it must have sometimes included "that tired feeling." Before this doctrine was discovered, the men who did not work, really could not be blamed. And since the priest now takes this risk upon himself there is excuse for none. In this way the infallible church has perfected.

This insight into the state of mind among the Corinthians, steels us for the contemplation of how they spoke in divers tongues. The peculiarity of this new religion which distinguished it from the Jewish system was that each member was to be a "son of God." Among the Jews, the prophets only were "sons

of man." Christ said: "be ye sons of God." The new church took this in its Semitic sense and every man was to be not only a prophet but a miracle worker. It was certainly an inducement to join and send money to the "poor saints at Jerusalem". In Corinthians 12-13-14, St. Paul sets forth these gifts. In Chapter 12, verses 8, 9 and 12, he explains: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the gift of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another interpretation of tongues."

Let us now search for truth, without a single assumption or a false deduction. It is noticeable that the accomplishment of speaking a strange language and that of interpretation were separate gifts. Therefore a man might, by an interpreter, speak in a strange tongue and be understood, but if another member of the church who did not have this second gift spoke in a strange tongue, the first member would not be able to know what the brother said except through some one who had the gift of interpretation. Why was it necessary to have an interpreter? Could not the man who spoke a strange tongue interpret for himself? As speaking and interpreting, however, were separate gifts, it might be that a member could have the gift of speaking in a strange tongue and not have faith for the other gift. Now the question arises:—Did the speaker himself know what he said?

That a man *did not* always interpret what he said himself is evident in the fifth verse of this chapter. St. Paul says: "I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather

that ye prophesied ; for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues except he interpret that the church may receive edifying."

That a man *could not* always interpret is clearly seen in the 13th verse. It says: "Wherefore let him that speaketh an unknown tongue pray also that he may interpret." They were different gifts, coming by separate prayer. We have not yet discovered why a man did not interpret what he said himself. Maybe he was to pray that he might interpret for others. Commencing at verse 27, St. Paul gives directions for speaking unknown tongues in meeting, as follows: "If any man speak in an unknown tongue let it be by two or at the most by three and that by course (one after the other), and let one interpret; but if there be no interpreter let him speak to himself and to God." It is becoming evident that they did not know what they were talking about themselves. In Chapter 14, we read: "Follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts but rather that ye may prophecy. For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God, for no man understandeth him. Howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." We will not draw any more conclusion from this than is evident. We learn in the second sentence the same fact that one man was not understood by others. In the last sentence we see, however, that if a man wishing to speak divers tongues came to church and there was no interpreter to tell what he said, and he sat down and talked to himself, he simply had faith that the Spirit was speaking "mysteries" to heaven. He believed this because St. Paul told him so. They were "mysteries." The man did not know what he said. St.

Paul had to explain the difficulty to him by saying the spirit was speaking "mysteries." The man's mouth was the medium of "mystery." The Spirit spoke to heaven.

Any one of these verses might be ordinary evidence that an inspiree did not understand himself in this gift. The fact that interpreters were necessary would argue the case ordinarily, because if a man could understand himself he could tell what he meant. Bible justifiers might argue that it was simply a custom for a man not to interpret his own talk although he could have done it.

This might be sufficient to settle the qualms of the faithful. A hundred points in the Bible stand upon such ingenuities. But the seven words beginning with "how-beit" are the words in the Bible that upon this subject are the key to truth. That these people did not know their own strange language is a fact according to the Bible. This inference cannot be shaken.

Only one question remains. Were these strange expressions actually living languages, although the Christians did not know what tongues they spoke? If an Arabian or a Parthian or an Elamite had happened to hear, might not he have recognized his native tongue? St. Paul rather accidentally left us some light upon this subject and incidentally dropped a hint to the Christians of Corinth. In Cor. 13:1, he says: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Therefore, if a man with much faith and linguistic ambition met a foreigner and tried his tongues and could not be understood; if his Arabian or Mesopotamian had too much of a brogue for practical purposes, the believer would instantly decide

he was talking with the "tongues of angels." It was a happy provision on the part of St. Paul. It was none the less effective, because of the way he dropped the remark. He does not tell them this in a simple direct statement. It is often his method when he has something important to tell, to start by making something else the subject of his remark and dropping in his other communication as an assumption; as a truth that seems to be so much a part of his mind that he forgets to state it. The church is left to discern it by noticing the unintentional information. Another of his methods was to inculcate a new idea into these ignorant people by asking a question as something they had no doubt observed, but which he is teaching for the first time. Both methods flatter their vanity. He understood the value of assumption in throwing ignorance out of a questioning mood. In this method of deceit he is an expert, both in his logic and his teachings.

Here then is the exact manner in which the gift of divers tongues operated. A man who spoke by gift in an unknown tongue, did not know what he was saying unless he met a brother who felt inspired to interpret and who would tell him what he probably meant. If he felt called upon to express some meaningless talk and no one felt inspired to interpret, the same faith that inspired him to say the strange expressions taught him to believe the Spirit was talking to God. The man who had the gift of speaking unknown tongues might get the faith by prayer by which he could interpret. It required a separate faith. In this case he could speak in unknown tongues, then say something in his own language and believe that was what he meant. It merely took faith. The Corinthians seem

to have been good subjects for faith after they understood the philosophy of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost was a Semitic idea rather foreign to the Corinthian mind. They had plenty of superstition but Paul had difficulty in grafting the Semitic point of view into the Greek. They believed in the Holy Ghost and evidently everything else of this nature. Being such a valuable possession they wished to be sure they had it and desired some infallible evidence. This was surely a hard point for St. Paul to solve. It is usually considered that when a man has the Holy Ghost he knows it. Paul told then that they must be "reprobates" if they had the Holy Ghost and did not know it. The Holy Ghost seems to have been an assumption resulting from a man's taking it on himself. The very fact that the Corinthians asked this question, however, shows that they did not have the Semitic point of view; so Paul had to give a sure symptom. He wrote, Cor. 12:3: "No man can say Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

Of course it occurred to many of the Corinthians that they had already said that. If a man had not made the statement, all that would be necessary would be for him to see if he could say it. If he succeeded he must have had the Holy Ghost. After that, if he felt inspired to talk the tongues of angels, or interpret, he would naturally have to be correct and infallible. The acknowledgment was simply priming the pump of faith. It served Paul's purposes.

Speaking in inspired tongues in church was exactly as follows, according to the Bible:

When the congregation met, anyone whom the Holy

Ghost moved would get up and speak a few words of wisdom or prophesy a while. Then if a brother felt moved to speak mysteries of the Holy Ghost he would arise and submit fully to the influence of inspiration, suppressing, of course, both his own will and intelligence, and then speak. The very fact that he said something that was not the result of forethought—something which he probably could not say again, and which, if repeated, would put him at a loss to explain why he said what he did rather than something else, would certainly be evidence that it was the product of divine chance. He would arise, for instance, and remark: "*Brnonojoy knanth balthy bor hingemaken fthengle bat torne dogan habberflong,*" and continue in that strain until the Holy Ghost told him to sit down. This, of course, would be a mystery that no one could understand, not even the speaker. In case, however, if some one felt inspired to interpret that evening, he would arise and tell what it meant. This may sound ridiculous to those who have not faith. It is not burlesque. Anyone who says that I am burlesqueing the church would have made a poor member of the Corinthian church of Christ.

It is a plain truth of the Bible plainly told.

If people like to hear a minister expand the scene of Pentecost and tell how the apostles came upon the street when about two million Hebrews from all parts of the civilized world were there; if they like to have him make the picture realistic, and describe the varied garbs and the grandeur of the scene, they cannot object when the same methods are applied to all parts of the Bible. If any man doubts this story he has not faith. If any Christian says this is ridicule he merely says the Bible is ridiculous. It

would become him better to examine the divers languages just written and pray for strength to say what it means. Outside of this strange sentence, however, there is no ridicule. Whether it is sarcastic I cannot say; I do not know what it means. It is divers tongues. If any one can interpret it and find it is sarcastic I may admit that the Holy Ghost is ridiculing the church.

Suppose that these poor people or mutual frauds or whatever they were, really had "faith;" suppose even that they did not have "faith," but merely superstition; would not this juggling with the unknowable become fascinating? Was it not an unique improvement upon the signs and omens connected with stubbing one's toe or having an itchy palm? It would be worth while for a Corinthian to arise, throw himself into a state of unpremeditation and let the Spirit use his voice to say: "*Ngarstar iltagorin bli monlatigor mhtr bangsterodigastentatantby. Jrg ilatas hertyajallimentolong,*" just to discover when the interpreter arose what the Spirit had expressed. There is no telling what it might mean.

Consider the Corinthian Christian and you will see that this was the most seductive gift in the catalogue. It would become as enticing as a game of chance. There was a vast difference between this gift and prophesying. In prophesying, a man had to express an intelligible idea; he had to use his mind merely to say something. The inspiration was not so self-evident to himself. When he got through it was a prophecy, an opinion; that was all. He sat down. In speaking divers tongues he waited to learn what thought he had been the instrument of expressing. If he believed, it was exciting. It was a game of

ghost. Its action is evident. It would naturally grow on the ones who believed. That it did have this effect is evident in the fact that Paul had to make a rule repressive by saying: "If any man speak in an unknown tongue let it be by two or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret." Of all the gifts, this is the only one upon which he had to write more than a chapter to adroitly regulate; at the same time justifying it by praise.

This is proof upon proof that speaking in divers tongues is as I say. Why? Because, if Paul wrote a chapter to regulate the indulgence of this gift alone, it shows there was a tendency to indulge it to the detriment of other gifts. If there was a tendency to overdo it, there was a reason. When we view this speaking in divers tongues as it was, we see the reason. The seven words, "Howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries," taken in connection with the other verses, show what this gift was. Its explanation of the rest corroborates the decision.

Why was this gift gotten up? To fulfil prophecy. St. Paul says, Cor. 14:21: "In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto the people; and yet, for all that, they will not hear me, saith the Lord." St. Paul evidently reasoned that the way to have prophecy fulfilled was to go to work and fulfil it.

In I. Cor. 14:22-23-24, St. Paul says: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not; but prophesying serveth not for them which believe not, but for them which believe. If, therefore, the whole church be come together into one place and all speak with tongues and there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are

mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not or one unlearned, he is convinced of all; he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so, falling down on his face, he will worship and report that God is in you of a truth."

Let us analyze this statement.

He is arguing that they should not speak in divers tongues too much, but should prefer prophecy. In this connection he says that speaking divers tongues is for a sign to others, and prophesying for them which believe. Therefore, it would seem that he prefers the gift that is a sign for believers. Then he immediately states that if they speak divers tongues visitors will think them mad. Then he argues that prophesying will convert visitors and divers tongues will not. Divers tongues is to strengthen the faith of them that believe. How then, in the name of sense, is divers tongues a sign to others? All that we can get out of this, is that it is a sign to others that the Christians were mad. Was Paul mad?

One fact is evident. Paul, being a linguist, saw that this fallacy would not live long with outsiders. If men who knew language came in and heard a whole roomful speak and not a gibberish among them with a linguistic root for recognition, the delusion would be laughed at. Paul, therefore, is much afraid the "unlearned" might come in. Now we have seen that it was to the unlearned, like the Christians themselves, that this gift appealed. An unlearned man who was told they were speaking foreign languages is the one who would most likely be awed. He could not deny it. Paul always covered his points as best he could. The fact is, Paul was struggling with a danger-

ous gift. He wanted the gift to fulfil prophecy, but for various reasons he wished to regulate it without discovering his motive. He wanted to keep the Holy Ghost from having its own way too much. The real solution, if he could have said it, would have been effected by studying the visitor closely and deciding whether he was the proper kind. If he was, some one could speak Angelic for a while. Thus St. Paul's theory, that it was for edifying others, could be carried out.

Archbishop Gibbons, in his book, "The Faith of Our Fathers," tells us in his chapter on the sacrament of confirmation, that the reason the laying on of hands and the giving of the Holy Ghost does not result now in the gift of unknown tongues, is that it was intended originally to edify the onlooker, and it is not necessary now because the church is established. This agrees partly with Paul. But Paul says in I Cor. 13:4: "He that speaketh an unknown tongue edifieth himself, but he that prophesieth edifieth the church." He then makes this distinction in favor of prophecy—prophecy edifies the church and divers tongues only edifies the speaker, i. e., not the church. If unknown tongues did not edify the church, how could it edify outsiders? How does it edify the man himself? By the Spirit speaking "mysteries."

Here is other evidence of what divers tongues was. In Cor. 14:14 Paul says: "For if I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prayeth but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also." Thus we see again that a man who even prayed in an unknown tongue did not know what he was saying. He did not do it with

his understanding. Paul insisted on the faith that brings interpretation, so that a man would be able to tell himself what he was praying for. When St. Paul says that unknown tongues is a sign for unbelievers, and also that it makes unbelievers think them crazy, and then states that it is only to edify a man himself, and in another place states that it does not even edify a man when he prays with them, and still praises the gift—which are you going to believe. How did Archbishop Gibbons get at what he believed? Did he decide by lot or please his fancy?

The evidence is that Paul, the linguist, started a fraud that took better than he thought; it became a craze; it had elements he did not reckon on. We learn in the chapters noted that they spoke in unknown tongues, they blessed in unknown tongues, they prayed in unknown tongues and sang in unknown tongues, and for all a man knew who did not have the gift of interpretation, he might have been cursing in unknown tongues. No wonder Paul saw the “gift” was getting beyond control. Paul wanted to govern the gift that was bringing danger of exposure. He praised the fraud because he saw its value as a tool for superstition and wished to make safe use of it. He could not do it without telling them the truth. This would weaken their faith; therefore all his fallacious arguments.

Let us examine it closely. Why did he say that if two or three spoke in succession in a meeting only one should interpret? It can be imagined that all the pleasures and enticements in the game of ghost consisted in being the speaker in unknown tongues and letting some one else do the interpreting. That was where the novelty lay. Why should a man get up and speak some Angelic

and then say it meant so and so? He might as well say his thought at first. When Paul praises unknown tongues and declares "I would that ye all spake with tongues," and then calls praying with unknown tongues praying with the spirit, and then insists on praying with both the spirit and the understanding,—is it not ridiculous?

It can be seen that there was little inducement to get up and translate another man's lingo. It took ingenuity, and the interest was all on the other side. They all wished to be the linguists; therefore there was a dearth of interpreters, and Paul had to encourage the art. But supposing a man had a revelation in an unknown tongue, and after he delivered it two interpreters rose simultaneously to tell what it meant. One would give way to the other. Would it not be interesting to the church to know, after the inspiration, whether the silent interpreter intended to give the same rendering as the one who spoke? It was necessary to limit this business to three linguists, and as interpretation came by inspiration, Paul as much as told them to be careful that not more than one interpreter was inspired in meeting. If one man did not like to try the whole job it regulated the talking for that meeting.

Is it not enough to make a man blush for a fellow being who contends that he believes this stuff to be a part of inspired truth on which man's salvation depends? It takes temerity to state the foolish facts.

Christian history tells us that Luke, who wrote the gospel and the book of Acts, was a companion and follower of Paul, from whom he got many, if not all, of his facts. Whether or not this is true, there is evidence of the same

hand in the epistles, in Luke and in Acts, and, as I intend to show, another book of the Bible. Acts, they say, was not written earlier than the year 63. The incident of the apostles speaking divers tongues was then at least thirty years past. It was a story of a past event. If Paul had written an account of how the Corinthians spoke divers tongues, thirty years after his epistle was sent, is it not likely that he would have given a long list of the many and special tongues they spoke in meeting? The same man who made the Corinthians believe they spoke foreign languages was the influence over the man who wrote Acts. In fact, it is likely that Paul, the linguist, originated the scheme, and that such a practice was not gotten up at the time the apostles appeared during Pentecost, some thirty years before Acts was written. Paul could have forged it all without fear of refutation. There were no printing presses; the book was only intended for the church itself. If the incident had occurred, eleven men who were considered drunk with "new wine" would not have left much impression on over two million Jews, if there were so many there. These people all scattered to the countries from which they came. The story was safe.

St. Luke, however, specifies about all the languages under the eastern skies as having been spoken by the eleven apostles. Imagine a crowd of people saying together in a score of languages, "Behold, are not these which speak Galileans. And now hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born, Parthians and Medes and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and in Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia in Egypt and in the parts of

Libya, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful words of God." All this is put into the mouths of the many-tongued audience. And all this time eleven apostles are supposed to have been speaking all these languages. And some one was there to take down what the crowd exclaimed. Why does not the writer of Acts state the report and tell his authority without trying to make it so impossibly realistic? It probably never happened.

And Peter stood up and said: "For these are not drunken, seeing it is but the third hour of the day." Circumstantial evidence coming from what Paul in the year 63 is said to have told Luke that Peter said, about the year 31, goes to show that they were not "full of wine," because it was so early they would not have had time to become drunk. Therefore they spoke divers languages. This is equal to Luke's little nicety of evidence which says that Gabriel appeared to Zacharias on the "right" side of the altar, rather than on the left. And still he did not know that the Jews sealed up the tomb of Christ.

One thing is evident. If the Corinthians could not speak divers languages by the Holy Ghost, the apostles could not, unless the Holy Ghost had deteriorated badly in a short time.

Is it not shameful that these things are believed in this age of enlightenment and freedom in the United States of America? Its belief, coupled with ingenuity and a man's willingness to prostitute his own intellect will make him Professor in a sectarian college and add five capital letters to the other end of his name. Is it not a consolation,

however, to know that there is at least one institution of learning in this country, founded, not on the obeisance of a few millions to a doctrinal prejudice, but by one man's munificence to the cause of unhampered education? Is it not consoling to know that this university is acquiring the men who have shown enough symptoms of brains to be out of sympathy with orthodoxy? And is it not a grand privilege for a man who has taken up the Bible conscientiously to see what is in it, to state plainly what he finds in the Bible? If the writer of this book finds he is an awful infidel the shock will not be as great as when he discovered that he had been going to church for years and had not been told the most evident facts by the men whose vocation is supposed to be that of telling the truth.

II.

HOW THEY DID MIRACLES.

The two sides of the miracle question usually stand as follows :

One man says miracles were done because the Bible says so. The other man says miracles were not done because nature denies the Bible. One man breaks the laws of nature on a piece of poor literature with a bad history. The other man is loyal to his environment ; to what the Creator has put before him in his lifetime ; the conditions that form the mind by which he conducts himself, and says the laws of nature being inviolable to man, God never broke them for man's edification. For my part, if there were no more proof, I would rather be the latter ; a patriot to God's universe ; a learner of the lesson he has seen fit to place before me.

God will damn no man for believing God's object lesson. An infidel is a man who believes the Bible.

Denial is the usual argument of busy humanity ; of those who believe the theologians and those who believe themselves. The result is that the Bible idolaters, not being able to prove that miracles were done, wind up by

saying that, anyway, if any one wishes to prove that they were not, he will have a hard job. It is interesting to notice how often they say this. Cardinal Manning has said it for the Catholics, and Prof. G. P. Fisher for the Protestants.

George Park Fisher, D.D., L.L.D., professor of ecclesiastical history in Yale college and author of "The Christian Religion," a text book studied by the Chautauquans, says: "But the principal thing which I wish to say under this head is that the burden of disproving Christianity and demonstrating that it rests on a false foundation, properly falls on the assailing party; and further, to intimate that the task is not a light one." This is the "principal thing" he has to say. This is the principal remark they all have to make. What is it? The mere information that if Christianity is proven to be false, unbelievers will have to do it. Did any one ever get an idea that the God-grammarians would do it? That is not their trade. Credit their candor.

Any man who has time to study the Bible can solve the miracle question. It is much easier than the gold and silver question. He can discard all arguments ever employed and find two new ones that are proofs. He can throw away either one and the other will stand alone. Let us look for them.

In earnestly studying this subject of miracles, we must remember that the books of the Bible, telling of the miracles done at the time of Christ, were written from thirty to forty years afterwards. If we wish to know facts, we must take writings and directions intended for persons who were supposed to be doing miracles at the time the

directions were written. In the 13th chapter of I. Corinthians, St. Paul explains and descants upon the different spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost, and finds it necessary to explain at length that "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." This explanation is necessary because it was an age of spirits. There were spirits of divination and spirits of healing and devils of different diseases. If a man had fits he was possessed of a devil which threw him into the water or into the fire with seemingly malicious motives and made him foam at the mouth. The Bible then states, as a doctor might have done, that the man then slept. Mary Magdalen was possessed of seven devils, and the account was written by someone who believed. They tell us one man was so full of the devil that he had enough devils in him to fill and disconcert a whole herd of swine so that they ran into the sea and were drowned, both hogs and devils. It was a good way of getting rid of the devils. The Corinthians would naturally think that each gift was the manifestation of a special spirit, so it is explained to them that they possess but one spirit that does it all.

After St. Paul informs his new church that all these gifts are due to one Spirit, the Holy Ghost, he says, in verse 28: "And God hath set some in his church; first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles; then gifts of healings; helps; governments; diversity of tongues." Did you ever hear this verse made the subject of a sermon? I never did. Whether or not the preachers have studied the Bible enough to know what it means, and therefore avoid it, I do not know. This is a list of the comparative honors of the different gifts. It is

the schedule of honor in use among Paul's churches,—the table of vanity. Paul tells the churches in the next verse that every man cannot be everything on the list by asking: "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" As Paul is evidently teaching them this fact, they might have appropriately replied that they knew nothing about it until St. Paul told them. We will eventually see into Paul's knowledge of vanity, however.

The next verse, I Cor. 12:31, is the key to this table of vanity. It says: "But covet earnestly the best gifts and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

Why should they covet? God was supposed, through the Holy Ghost, to confer different gifts upon these people. Now, if God saw fit to give a man the gift of healing or the gift of tongues, why should Paul tell them to aspire to certain gifts? Did a man dictate to God what he should be? Why should he choose? Why should he "aspire?" Is not the Holy Ghost infallible? Is not God omniscient? Is this "humility?"

If God, in those days, saw fit to make a man a healer of the sick, why should he aspire to be a prophet—a man who noticed the visitor who came into church and prophesied in such a way that he would feel that "thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest"—a fortune teller? In short, why was it necessary for St. Paul to think up and write out this graduated list of honor? The reason is seen in the fact that he takes the gifts that were not easy frauds and places them low on his table of vanity. In fact, if some of these gifts had not been so shaky as not to stand the

test of proof, he would not have seen the necessity of getting up this scheme when he started his church.

Let us examine it on that basis. First come apostles. Paul was an apostle,—of course that is highest. Next come prophets. There is little danger in being a prophet. A man may prophesy a hundred years ahead and never live to know the Holy Ghost was mistaken. If he uses good judgment a certain amount comes true, and the ones that happen are the ones that count. Fortune-telling is run on that score. Fortune-telling is a monetary success to-day. “Thirdly come teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing.” It is noticeable that there is a distinction between doing a miracle and curing a disease,—between coming into church and saying you did a random miracle, such as killing a fig tree by word of mouth, and claiming you had healed sick people by touch. A miracle might be a random doing at odd times and told afterward. No one could insist upon a Christian turning a halbert into a handsaw without seeming to trifle with his powers. He could refuse. However, if a man got the name of curing the diseased, sick persons might be brought to him, and in the name of love and humanity he could make no excuse. That is why miraculous healing is not included in the general head of miracle but is made a separate kind of gift. It is for the purpose of getting it lower on the list.

It was only fifth honor, this ability to benefit the weak; the lame; the unfortunate. Fortune-telling was next to the highest.

The reason it is placed lower in honor is to influence the church members not to try it; not to aspire to it; not, in fact, to get the reputation of healing. St. Paul allowed

useless miracles to stand fairly high because he knew there was an ingredient of the liar in such superstitious communities which could be depended upon to keep up the name of miracle. He knew human nature. There would be a certain number of members who had faith and a certain number who were liars. This appealing to them to avoid certain gifts by the strongest influence he knew, vanity, not only kept believers from attempting healing and thus undeceiving themselves, but it warded off the liars before they had time to make a name for healing and thus, by being called upon, making a failure, and undeceiving not only the faithful but outsiders.

He appealed to them through the impulse that moves a liar—vanity.

There was, no doubt, a certain amount of faith cure then as now. If a credulous and anxious person who was sick came to a Christian and believed he was well, it would keep up the gift of healing fairly well. However, the new sect was taught not to aspire to it. If St. Paul had it fixed so that healing was not attempted except upon those who were credulous enough to come without urging, it could be depended upon that they would be credulous enough to get well. Faith would thus be added to the elect. If they failed, there was Paul's statement that all were not given the same gifts, and it was a higher gift to simply be wise and teach. Not only the outsiders, but Christians themselves could be the dupes of St. Paul by means of this studied scheme. The speaking of divers tongues was placed seventh and last in honor. This was the great hitch among all the gifts. If St. Paul had known how it was going to operate he might never have encouraged it.

A man might be a fortune teller and prophesy with respectable results; he might teach; he might speak words of wisdom. No doubt, some would lie about miracles, and it is likely some persons who had enough faith to come might imagine themselves well. It happens to-day. But if a Corinthian haver of the Holy Ghost went up to an Arabian and talked, the Spirit would have to stand a purely supernatural test upon the spot. St. Paul was a great linguist, and as the speaking in divers tongues proved so fascinating to the church he saw its danger to himself. It not only appealed to them by its superstitious communication with the Holy Ghost, but as the Corinthians were ignorant, this mark of linguistic learning was doubly fascinating. And withal it was so easy to do.

St. Paul, being a linguist, knew that if this were indulged in to a great extent there would never be a corroboration that they spoke with the tongues of men. There might be linguistic visitors who would make corroboration to the opposite effect. It was put at the lowest rating. The fact that this lowest honor upon the list is the only one upon which St. Paul writes separately and discourages in a whole chapter, while non-committally praising it, proves the motive by which this schedule of honor was gotten up. Look at that list of honor—"firstly," "secondarily,"—and the appeal to vanity.

Why was prophesying put at the head of the list? For this reason: When healing and divers tongues were placed so low as to be undesirable there would be nothing left that was self-evidently miraculous, excepting prophecy. St. Paul had much confidence in prophecy or fortune-telling as a means of affecting beholders and the faithful.

Those prophecies that turned out well would certainly be miraculous. It would compensate for those that did not eventuate, for such prophecies would be spoken by those who imagined they had the gift, but were mistaken. It was the only fraud that was promising and safe. It had to be made the most of. It was the only mystic lever. St. Paul placed this gift next to the apostleship.

This schedule of honor was gotten up to keep the church members from attempting things that were impossible, by placing miracles, healing and divers tongues low in honor and then appealing to vanity. It proves that miracles were a fraud and an impossibility at that time.

If the gifts of healing and speaking tongues came from a divine power as is claimed, and if the Holy Ghost selected certain persons for certain gifts, what was the use of this table of honor? Suppose a believer tried to heal a sick man and failed. It would be no harm, would it? He would never get a name for healing, unless he was a liar, and the church would not be embarrassed. If the Holy Ghost operated as is said, it would be worth a man's trying to discover his powers. But suppose a man discovered that he could actually heal the sick and mend the maim, and told it, and others were brought to him; why should this be placed low in estimation? Would it not be grand and wonderful and humane? As long as the Holy Ghost saw fit to give to man the power to heal, was it not the highest humanity of which he could be capable? Again, why should St. Paul get up this table of vanity? Because there were impossibilities. The table is a fraud. It was intended to keep the faithful from attempting certain things. To those who tried miracles and failed it offered

the consolation of vanity. Healing was only fifth honor anyway. Such were called to prophesy. It was intended to regulate the lies of the liars by the main motive of lying—vanity.

Did St. Paul believe in miracles and the infallible Holy Ghost? If he had believed he would not have originated this scheme.

Could the Corinthians do miracles? We see they could not. The same man who was a companion of Luke and who associated with Barnabas, and who had Mark for a servant, proves they could not. Paul says a righteous lie is not punishable. He was one of the apostles; a chosen man by "revelation;" a companion of the authors of eternal truth.

This was but a short time after the ministry of Christ. Were miracles ever done? If the same eternal Holy Ghost could not do miracles in the year 45 or 50 it could not do them in the year 30. It is not supposable that the Holy Ghost spoiled. Miracles were never done. The accounts in Acts and the Gospels, we are told, were written from fifty to seventy years after the events were supposed to have happened. They were stories intended as a history for the faithful. They might be anything that suited the author's notion. The epistles were written directly to the churches to contend with the difficulties. They were not written for the public at large. In them we discover the truth. Thanks to science, the printing press got hold of them and the dark ages began to clear up. Were miracles ever done? We discovered they were not. We have the proof.

Let us put aside the evidence and prove the fact once more. It is pleasant to serve the truth.

Christians make much objection to the rational Bible searchers' method of noticing that the stories in the different books do not agree, and in fact are contradictory. The Bible idolaters argue the liability of human testimony to error in spite of its being inspired. To serve this point they have invented a new phrase, "divine dictation," to show that inspiration does not have this sense; that it has been misunderstood. For the sake of accommodation, let us avoid this perfectly just method of comparing testimony. We will not notice contradictions unless an author denies his own statement as well as nature in the same story, and unless we can explain why he did it.

Let us take a revelation first, as shown in the story of Zacharias and the annunciation of John, told only in the book of Luke. This gospel is the only one with an apologetic introduction. It is the only one that tells of the annunciation to Zacharias, the Pharisee priest.

While Zacharias was standing in the holy place of the temple burning incense, "there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right hand side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was much troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him: Fear not Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him (Christ) in the spirit and power of Elias to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,

and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And Zacharias said unto the angel: Whereby shall I know this, for I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years? And the angel answering him, said: I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of the Lord; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And behold thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak until the day that these things are performed because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season. And the people waited for Zacharias and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple; for he beckoned unto them and remained speechless.”

A plain story of an actual happening does not contradict itself because nature is consistent. It is when a man makes up a story to carry out several points that he either uncovers one point trying to cover another, or tells a tale that is artificial and exposes his lie.

Imagine a man standing in the quiet holy place of the temple suddenly visited by Gabriel; the angel that stands next to the throne of God, clothed in truth and invested with the divine glory of a million ages. That angel tells Zacharias that his wife will have a son. Zacharias wants a sign. Gabriel did not seem to be much of a sign to him. One would think Zacharias had been used to seeing Gabriel every day if it were not for the statement that Gabriel had to introduce himself.

Can any greater sign present itself to the human intellect than the appearance of an arch-angel from heaven? Can it be imagined? Would it be in human nature to ask for more of a sign? But Zacharias wanted a sign.

It might seem that Zacharias wanted more of a sign because the proposed event was so utterly inconceivable and more than ordinarily impossible that Zacharias could not believe. The angel first addressed him in the following words: "Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son." Zacharias had been praying for a son. He thought it possible that God would interpose and give him one in an ordinary way. The angel Gabriel, in all his glory, came and told him his prayer was answered. Zacharias could not believe it, however, without a sign, because himself and Elizabeth were well stricken in years. What was he praying for?

Then we read that John was born, "and it came to pass that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said: Not so, but he shall be called John. And they said unto her: There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table and wrote, saying his name is John. And they marvelled all."

It is noticeable that Zacharias has also become deaf to suit the emergency. They made signs to him. Why was it that they "marvelled all?" Because whoever wrote this story wants to prove it is wonderful that Elizabeth said he should be called John, and Zacharias, who could not hear, wrote the same thing. It is evident then that Zacharias in all these months had not written a line to his wife, although the story says he went home after the revelation. It must have been revealed to her also.

Why is this story so laughably artificial? Because it was gotten up with a motive; it is a case of write-up revelation. The book of Luke is the only one of the gospels that tells us anything about the family relationship of John and Christ. It is the only one that tells us of an annunciation of John's birth to Zacharias. It is the only one that tells us, that when the angel revealed to Mary that she would have a son, he also revealed to her that it had been revealed to Elizabeth, through Zacharias, that she would have a son. If it were not for this book we would know nothing about the Holy Family circle. This story is the result of trying to prove Christ's divinity by a more complete and complicated method than the other authors use. The other three simply have John appear in the wilderness preaching Christ with not a word about who he was or where he came from. As Christ was preceded by John, who was to bear witness to him, Christ's divinity rests first on John's testimony. The three writers who say nothing of divine intercession in John's birth, dwell strongly on the appearance of the dove at Christ's baptism. John and Christ are not supposed to know each other. St. John has the Baptist to say: "I knew him not." And yet their mothers were cousins; they lived many years in the same country; when the annunciation came, Mary went to visit Elizabeth, and according to all the "beautiful story" I have read, they dwelt in divine rapture for three months; they were conscious of their divine destiny before the sons were born; both families must have visited Jerusalem to attend the feasts of the Passover, and yet these strong young men never traveled far enough to get acquainted. Dr. Smith, of Bible dictionary fame, would have us believe it was

because they lived too far apart. And yet it was so near, according to Luke, that a virgin with child traversed it twice, and maybe more times for all we know.

It can be seen there is a sad difficulty in Holy Writ. This difficulty has already been written upon as a discrepancy between different books. The difficulty, it must be noticed, does not in this case arise from any author disagreeing with himself. When three writers say nothing of John's origin and rest Christ's divinity on the dove's descent and have John and Christ meet as though they were unacquainted, there is no contradiction. The difficulty arises out of Luke's story, making it hard to believe the story of the others, and especially of St. John, who has, the Baptist say: "I knew him not." Now the key to truth lies in observing how Luke, who tells of their relationship, gets over the baptism himself. He treats of it the least. He says: "But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him (John the Baptist) for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in bodily shape like a dove upon him and a voice came from heaven which said: Thou art my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." It is noticeable that Luke speaks of John's imprisonment before he tells of the baptism. In the introduction to this gospel of Luke (and it is the only one that has an introduction or apology), it is specially stated twice that the object of Luke writing a gospel is to set things forth "in order." We learn from the other three books, that Christ was

baptized and then some time during the forty days following John was imprisoned. We know anyway that John must have baptized him before he was imprisoned. Luke's account does not necessarily contradict this fact, but the very gospel that is to set things forth in order, goes on to tell of John's incarceration; then as an after-thought, a side issue, goes on to tell of Christ's baptism. It does not even say definitely that it was John who baptized Christ. It makes no reference to their not knowing each other either by statement or intimation as the others do. Why? Because John's divine origin is already made known to the reader of this gospel and it makes no difference about the point. Why then this loose and peculiar way of telling it? If Luke knew Christ was baptized before the imprisonment, why does he not tell it that way? It is because this is a literary subterfuge, a shuffling over the point, a literary after-thought. As this point makes no difference in this gospel it is not noticed, and at the same time it is a smooth evasion of what Luke knows is in the gospels of what he calls the "many" who had "taken in hand" to write the life of Christ.

It is on the consideration of such points that I say the story of Zacharias was a made-up story resulting from this author's different way of going about the task of accounting for Christ's divine origin. It is St. Paulism by Luke's hand. Therefore it sought to be a vast and complicated improvement on the others. Paul being a Pharisee, he has the whole system originate in Zacharias, a Pharisee priest. That is the motive and method of this way of stating Christ's divinity.

Why is Zacharias placed in the incense room while a

multitude are worshipping without? Because the next strongest evidence to a revelation to a multitude is to have a man suddenly appear before a multitude so that "they perceived he had seen a vision in the temple." So it was necessary to have Zacharias carry out some evidence. And thus we have the ridiculous story of Zacharias asking Gabriel for a sign. Telling the story in this way lends it an appearance of corroboration to the faithful. This story proves itself a hippodrome, not because it is contradictory to the other writers, but because it contains such impossible contradictions of human nature within itself. We might believe that God sent an archangel, if he has one, to earth. He could do so if he wished. But no man, who had been asking in prayer for a son by the natural course of events, ever asked the greatest divine demonstration conceivable to the human mind for a sign because, forsooth, he was so old he did not believe Elizabeth could have a son. And a dumb priest to whom this vision appeared did not remain placidly in the temple tending to his duties as a priest until "after the days of his ministration was accomplished." And then he did not go home and say nothing to his wife and gradually become deaf to carry out the climax to the story. God never planned to save the souls of future independent Americans and casual Frenchmen and thinking Germans by such a piece of foolishness. And what is more, they are not being saved that way.

Miracles and mendacity go together. We see this in miracles of motive.

Imagine St. John sitting down with us to write a miracle. The subject is: "Turning water into wine." Christ and his mother are at a wedding in Cana. Christ's

mother says : "They have no wine." As it might be supposed that Christ was simply seized upon by superstitious people as a God and that he therefore became God by chance, it must be shown that, although Christ dwelt as an ordinary man for twenty-seven years, he was conscious of his divine nature and was waiting for a set time to appear. So Christ answers his mother : "Woman, what have I to do with thee ? My time is not yet come." This word "woman" shows his divine nature. His mother told the servants, however, to do as he said. So they brought six purification pots of two to three firkins apiece, and when they were filled with water to the brim, Christ said : "Draw off and bear to the governor of the feast."

It would now be necessary to show that this wine was not diluted, and this could be accomplished by having the governor of the feast pay it as high a compliment as possible by comparing it with other wine, and this must be done in a realistic way. It is necessary also that the governor of the feast should not know that the wine was miracle-made or it might be supposed he was paying the miracle a compliment. So the miracle would read : "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom and saith unto him : Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine ; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse ; but thou hast kept the good wine till now."

It would not occur to the man who was writing this miracle that if he started out by saying "they have no wine," that it would be inconsistent when wine was eventu-

ally made and brought to the governor to have him say : “Thou hast kept the good wine till now,” i. e., “it is better than the poor wine we had at first.”

If this was founded on fact how can it be straightened out? Maybe John meant when he wrote “They have no wine” that the supply had given out at last and they wanted more. This would not do, for the compliment is founded on the fact that people bring out their good wine first when the guests are sober, and serve the poor wine when they are not able to judge. “Thou hast kept the good wine till now” means to the reader that it was the latter part of the feast and they had been having wine. According to the very nature of the custom which John dwells upon, the compliment to Christ’s wine would be valueless. He would not have them drink wine at the feast and then bring some on at the last and try to prove it was good by dwelling on the observation that men at the latter part of the feast did not know good wine.

John meant what he said : “They have no wine.” He started out with that idea and got so interested in his compliment that he forgot the circumstances. He simply wrote it, and as he had no definite conception of a real occurrence and it was his own work, it did not appear inconsistent.

As this was the time to prove, before his first miracle, that Christ had been waiting consciously all his life, he said : “My time is not yet come.” If this were the case, it was incumbent upon him not to do a miracle. But if he did not it would look as though he could not. It would look as though he could not do miracles until people with faith attributed them to him. So St. John had him say his

time was not yet come to do miracles, and immediately he did one.

Let us try to believe this by every means possible. Maybe they had had wine. If that was the case, and it was gone, Christ could have put more in the same vessels. He would not have used the jars the family washed in. Maybe when Christ said "My time is not yet come," he meant the wine was not quite gone and he did not care to make more as long as there was wine. In that case Mary would not say, "They have no wine." That could not be. This wine, according to the story, was served at the end of the feast. John would not have Christ make wine after the governor had been leading the festivities and then call attention to the fact that such a man was no judge. He would have it occur at a wedding where wine was wanting. The start of the story, "There is no wine," meant there was none.

Therefore the story is incredible. We might believe that God saw fit, nineteen centuries ago, to raise the dead if we were told a good reason for it, but when we are told that a man who was at a wedding, on being presented with wine for the first time, remarked, "Thou hast kept the good wine till now," reason revolts.

God would not throw such foolish difficulties in our way.

Let us swallow all the theological arguments, smoothing over the discrepancies of the different authors' accounts. Prof. Fisher remarks: "What shall be said of the objections to the credibility of the Gospels from alleged discrepancies? The first thing to be said is that the objection is irrelevant." Let us believe as much of

this as possible. Let us go farther and not call them "alleged discrepancies," like an editor afraid of a suit for libel, but simply call them discrepancies, and assume that one author disagreeing with another makes no difference. But how are we going to believe a man who disagrees with himself so much in telling a plain story, and disagreeing because of the motives that actuate a liar? If a man sees an event and tells a simple, true story, that story cannot be inconsistent.

Let us take a miracle of killing by the Holy Ghost.

We learn early in Acts that those who believed in this new doctrine sold their possessions and "brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet." They did not give it into the apostles' hands. Were the apostles worshipped as gods in those days? Were the people so groveling or was it the custom of giving people money by laying it at their feet? This was written in the year 69 by Luke, who followed Paul. Paul was having this written for a beautiful example that can be understood by observing his two letters to the Corinthians, which consist of arguments written around solicitation for money. He wrote I. Corinthians to tell them to begin saving. He wrote II. Corinthians to collect the money. Why was the money in Acts laid at the apostles' feet? Because it conveys the idea that the people did it in spite of the apostles' disdain for money. To give money to the apostles in an ordinary way they would have to hold their hands. If it were laid at their feet they could not help it. Of course they would not let it lie. But it intimates beautifully that the apostles would not hold their hands.

Immediately afterward we read in Chap. V. of Ananias

who sold his land and kept back part of the money, "his wife, Sapphira, also being privy to it." Ananias and Sapphira did not say they had given all, as is seen by Peter's remark: "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of thy land?" Peter evidently read his heart by the Holy Ghost. How could poor Ananias inform the baffled Holy Ghost what Satan's ideas were?

"While it remained was it not thine own? And after it was sold was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God."

Probably Satan reasoned the same as the Holy Ghost did, and thought that after it was sold it was in Ananias' own power. So he was privileged to give what he wanted. Of course no man imagines he can lie to God successfully. Some might imagine they could lie to an apostle. This story is a beautiful warning not to think a lie to an apostle.

"Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and gave up the ghost; and great fear came on all that heard these things." It might seem that Ananias fell overcome with the enormity of his own crime, and Peter did not cause him to die. Peter, in this case, might be sorry. As Ananias had been struck dead by the Holy Ghost for thinking and acting a lie, it can be seen that Sapphira, who knew that Ananias did not give all, was doomed to the same fate.

"And the young men arose, wound him up and carried him out and buried him. And it was the space of about three hours after when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in." It would be natural for the Holy Ghost to

strike her dead immediately. The Holy Ghost knew her mind. The Holy Ghost, it seems however, has to deal in technicalities and take evidence to justify the verdict. So Peter, who seems to be prosecuting attorney, not only asks her a question, but furnishes her the cue for lying, for it says: "And Peter answered unto her: Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much. And she said: Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her: How is it that ye have agreed to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which buried thy husband are at the door and shall carry thee out." This makes it evident that the summary justice of the Holy Ghost was deliberate. "Then fell she down straightway at his feet and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon the church and as many as heard these things." This last sentence is evidently the moral.

It is hard to believe, though, that they could take a man and comply with the Jewish formalities and wrap him properly and get ointment and spices and arrange for a tomb and carry him through the streets and bury him and get back all in "about the space of three hours after." Maybe they just dumped Ananias somewhere. If they could carry him through the streets without question and dead people were not missed in the metropolis of Jerusalem, what was the use of a Holy Ghost? Why not use a hammer? And to think that when Ananias had a fatal attack of the Holy Ghost they did not tell his wife or invite her to the funeral! She came in, happily, just when the model young men get back. She was just in time to be carried out. It is not said that the young men wrapped Sap-

phira for burial as they did Ananias. They just carried her out and buried her beside her husband. It probably did not take the young men so long this time. They had practice. It would be interesting to know what the Holy Ghost did with the rest of the money. When Luke wrote this, A. D. 69, he should have asked Paul about it. All these details, however, were subordinate to the general moral effect of the story on the churches. It shows how quickly a man could be buried after he thought a commercial lie to a priest. This is a miracle with a motive. The telling shows it to be either a case of mendacity or a case of mendacity and murder.

Let us, in this connection, consider what Paul wrote to the Corinthians. He said: "For in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken." If any man can explain how every one in a company can take his supper before the others he will do wonders for science and be a boon to boarding house keepers. It would seem to me that as soon as the first man succeeded in getting his supper the others could not very well be before him. Let us suppose that each man in the company vied only with his neighbor. When one man got his supper "before other" how could the "other" be before him? These are supposed to be infallible words: "Every one taketh his supper before other." What does this begin to teach us? It is likely that what Paul said was not founded on absolute fact. He was not doing away with those meals because the etiquette did not suit him. He wanted an excuse to cover his real motive, and scared up a vague generality out of his brain. It is another case of a lie overleaping itself. There may

have been some basis to it. St. Paul, however, does not say that Levi and his wife, or Philip and his family are gluttonous and the custom had better be stopped. He took what basis of truth he had and exaggerated it because he had a motive. We will look for this motive later on.

When the Bible forces itself upon us as being ignorant we lose confidence in it. We look out for the ignorance. Luke says, in his introduction: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." According to the punctuation of this sentence, Luke is going to set the life of Christ in order, consecutively. Now Bible chronologists have given up as a hopeless task the taking of all the anecdotes of Christ and making a consecutive and sure history. We have seen that Luke does not put the cardinal points "in order." Therefore, Luke is a liar, according to Christians.

Maybe the sentence is wrongly punctuated. Maybe it should be, "to write to thee, in order most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty, etc." The first part of the introduction, however, saying that others had "taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us," seems to preclude any other interpretation of the former sentence than the one the punctuation has given it. But how do we know? This shows us how big a fact might rest in a small piece of type. There may be other parts of the Bible having mistakes of the utmost import. Some proof reader may have to answer for the loss of a world.

Do you believe that God has founded his creation on a book? If you do, are you not afraid your eternal soul may founder on a comma?

The Pharisees were sent out to ask John the Baptist who he was, and John said he preceded a greater prophet. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith: Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said: After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me. And I knew him not but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying: I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and it abode upon him. And I knew him not but that he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me: Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending like a dove, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

Is this an account of the baptism of Christ? Smith's dictionary, an authority, says it is. Imagine a man seeing Christ coming and declaring him the Lamb of God; then baptizing him; then seeing the Holy Ghost descend, and then declaring the evidence that the man was Christ was that he was not to know him until he saw the Holy Ghost descend! The only way to get around this would be to say that Christ had been baptized previously; that he came walking that way some time afterward, and that this is John the Baptist's account of it. That might be a good way to avoid the discrepancy. According to this then, there is no account in John of the actual baptism of Christ. Christians accept this as the baptism.

Dr. Smith, in his great Bible dictionary, exclaims:

“How is John’s acknowledgment of Jesus at the moment of his presenting himself for baptism compatible with his subsequent assertion that he knew him not save by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, which took place after the baptism? It must be borne in mind that their places of residence were at the two extremities of the country, with but little means of communication between them. It is possible, therefore, that they had never met before. It was certainly of the utmost importance that there should be no suspicion of concert or collusion between them.” Is this an explanation?

Dr. Smith starts out to explain how John’s statement that he knew Christ before the baptism is compatible with his statement afterwards that he was not to know him until the dove descended. Then Dr. Smith goes on to explain how John’s statement that he was not to know him is compatible with the fact that they lived in the same country and were related, by saying they lived far apart. Is that the point to be explained here?

The point is, why did John say he knew Christ and then say he was not to know him? That is the question. That is what the Reverend Dr. Smith pretends to explain. Does he do it? Read the Bible experts for truth and you will find yourself deceived and adroitly sidetracked in every instance into a different question or bunted against a theological term. That is what the educated ministry is for. Such logic proves that the Bible is accepted only by poor reasoners, and that the necessity of sustaining it has begotten a demand for people who can give the appearance of reasons. Moreover it has not only created a demand for, but has cultivated a school of perverted thought

that is a detriment to every study in our orthodox colleges.

The question here is, why did John say he knew Christ and then say he was not to know him. Has that anything to do with the distance they lived apart, and the nature of the country? And if it had, did not Mary, a virgin with child, traverse it twice? This is an account of Christ's baptism or else John gives none. How he got it in this manner is easily understood. He was so anxious to emphasize Christ's divinity that he happily has John's Holy Ghost recognize him even while he was coming. Then to rest it all surely on divinity and prove there was no collusion, he says John the Baptist was not to know him except by the descent of the dove. St. John wrote this in the same way he wrote the wine and water miracle. He did not see the inconsistency. When a man's mind is filled with the Holy Ghost there is no room left for common sense.

There might be a way to explain this if the other accounts did not say that the dove descended after Christ was baptized. John does not say this definitely. The Baptist saw him coming and recognized him. Maybe he saw the dove coming along with him. The God-grammarians do not choose to believe this, however. The whole story then is a lie. The proof of it is that those who perpetuate the doctrine try to avoid the facts and give logic that is an injury to the God-made mind of man.

Sometimes they differ. Speaking of Mary's visit, Dr. Smith says: "Three months after this and while Mary still remained with her, Elizabeth was delivered of a son." Tallmadge and Buell, in their "Beautiful Story," say: "For reasons which the Bible does not give us to know,

Mary returned to Nazareth before the birth of Elizabeth's child, though the event must have been expected near the time of her departure." Neither of these statements is prefaced with an "if" or a "probably." Both are told as facts for the faithful. They do not depend on anything but the observation of a short story in the English Bible. Has not assumption had as much to do with the making of the religion as it has with explaining it? Can a man find truth in the Bible and believe without doing his mind an injury?

How can a young man or woman with a mind trained in the "higher education," pick up this Bible and not be confronted with an eyesore? How can he, if he has been trained as a close reasoner, a lover of the truth, pick up the God-grammarians and allow his intellect to be insulted? If this must be, let us cultivate the dark ages and live in ignorance and bliss and holy battle.

Miracles were never done. Why do we know? Because they were the basis of a system of religion that perpetuates educated deceit. It must have been founded in the same spirit.

III.

HOW THE TRINITY IS ONE.

The Trinity is miscalled a mystery. The authority upon which the Trinity rests was forged in the fifteenth century. It consists of the words: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (I. John 5:7). Of the 150 manuscripts from which the epistle of John was translated, only four have this sentence. They are, the Codex Guelpherbytanus, of the seventeenth century, the Codex Ravianus, subsequent to the year 1514, the Codex Britannicus or Monfortii, of the fifteenth or sixteenth century, and the Codex Ottobonianus, of the fifteenth century. The words: "He that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also," (I. John 2:23) were only found in these books, being forged at the same time. In all New Testaments these last words are printed in italics to show the unreliability. The so-called Trinity verse, however, is not treated so openly but is put in the text of inspired truth.

The reason of this is, the italic verse is not needed to bolster up a doctrine and honesty is in that case allowable.

The other verse, however, is the only definite support of the Trinity and it has been accepted by means of the Holy Ghost. Inspiration was thus at work on the Bible at a late day.

For pulpit and creed purposes, the Word has become the Son and the Trinity is said to be "the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." If this passage of the Bible was accepted as it was written in the fifteenth century and put into the Bible as Holy Writ, what right have the creed-makers to teach the Trinity under different wording? Unless they can prove that the "Word" as John intends it, and the "Son" are the same, the preachers are guilty of perversion. A close study of the Bible shows this to be the case. The Bible says: "The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost are "one." The preachers tell us, "the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are one." Will we believe the preachers or do some thinking ourselves?

It is a peculiarity of John that he frequently speaks of the Word in his epistles. No other writer makes use of this expression. John also speaks frequently of the Son in the same letters. He uses sometimes one term and sometimes another, and there is no indication that he attached the same signification to the words. Why should he use the two words with one meaning? That he did not intend this is not only reasonable to suppose, but this view is attested plainly by observing the method of the man who wrote the Trinity verse in the fifteenth century.

This monk or amanuensis who interpolated a verse and used the expression, "Word," might be thought to be actuated merely by a desire to imitate John's style or peculiar expression for "Son."

However, the same amanuensis also forged at the same time the verse: "He that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." He also made a distinction. Why should he use "Word" in one verse and "Son" in another if it was not the result of thought, of observing a difference? There must be some reason or else the Bible is a random, slipshod affair, and everything is figure of speech rather than fact. In that case it is not authority. The monk who interpolated these verses to the Holy Bible deliberated. He thought. We must look for the thought in his work. We will study, as he probably did, what John meant by "the Word."

We first come across the "Word" in the New Testament, in the introduction of John's Gospel. Putting out of mind the assumption that the "Word" means the "Son," a fair reading of this introduction shows what John meant by his expression.

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not." What does this mean? Did the man who wrote it simply do so to say that two things are one with the mere object of constructing a difficulty. Not if he was sane. John's object was to show that this doctrine of Christianity, which is frequently spoken of as the Truth, was not an upstart theory or institution. Truth is eternal. The Word was to his mind the Truth—the new doctrine of Christianity. So he says: "In the beginning was the

Word (Truth of Christianity) and the Word was with God and the Word (Truth) was God." Why then, Christians might ask, did not John use the word Truth? For the simple reason that any one who acknowledges a God knows he is Truth, and Truth is with him and Truth is eternal and unchangeable. Every one, however, does not recognize Christianity as Truth. So the "Word" was John's expression for what he considered the real Truth, Christianity. If he simply said Truth he would have said something that a Jew would admit, but his idea of Truth would be different. The "Word" was a necessary distinction to John. "In him was life and the life was the light of men." That is, spiritual life, Christian doctrine or Truth, which in John's theory made life worth living. "And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not"—i. e., the Jews did not perceive it. They did not understand their prophecies. The Truth existed but men's minds were too dark to see it.

This whole introduction is merely a statement that Christianity is the Truth of God and that Truth is eternal. It is an attempt to put this fact in such a way as to show that Christianity is not a theory.

A theologian, therefore, might imagine that Christ himself is the truth of God's doctrine, and, therefore, the Word and Christ or the Son are the same. But John continues: "There was a man sent from God (John the Baptist) whose name was John. The same came for a witness to bear witness to the light that all men through him might believe." We here discover that the "light" was Christ, or rather his teachings. Christ was only a "light" by teaching the truth. He would not have been

much of a light otherwise. The light was his "teaching," and it is the lack of a distinction here by which modern man-idolaters get all their mystery out of the Trinity.

If Christ was the Word and the Word was God and life was in God, and out of this life came light and this light was Christ, then Christ was merely the whole thing; Christ was in himself by several removes and came out of himself by a long process. We do not know what it all means, except that either John or the theologians must have been crazy. Above all, it does not teach us a fact or give an idea. That is theology. This explanation has less beauty than the merest infidel could give it unhampered by orthodoxy. The theologians who say Christ is the Word do not have as beautiful a conception of their doctrine as was possessed by a forging monk of the fifteenth century.

Here is the proof :

This monk or Catholic thinker must have read John's gospel and studied it before he copied John's epistle. It had been canonized a thousand years, and he knew it. With the exception of the abstract and unfounded theory of the Trinity, existing at that time, this introduction to John's gospel was apparently the most abstruse passage in the Bible. So this Catholic thinker, in copying the scripture, got to the first epistle of John, and coming to the seventh verse, he read : " And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is Truth." He discovers that John speaks of the Father, the Son, the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Word, the Truth ; not to speak of God, or John's reference to " the fathers " or apostles that bear witness to the " little children " of the church.

It would appear to this Catholic thinker that John was rather figurative, would it not? Casual Bible readers might become confused. It is easily conceived that the Spirit and the Comforter are only other names for the Holy Ghost. And John says: "The Spirit is Truth." So much is straightened out. But this is no explanation of John's "Word." John's use of this word in his Gospel makes it an enigma, in appearance. So when John got to the point of telling what bore witness of the whole religion—"And it is the Spirit (Holy Ghost) that beareth witness because the Spirit is Truth"—it was an important place to straighten out and make sure of a definite understanding. So this Catholic thinker went to work to weed out a few figures of speech. He looked up John's "Word" in his gospel. He there noticed something significant. John did not speak of "the Father" in that passage. It was simply God. "The Father" was not in the beginning. Simply the Truth (the Word) was in the beginning. So this Catholic thinker set his brains to work for the benefit of humanity and wrote, "The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, these three are one."

And for this reason: It was the one great difference between Christianity and Judaism that Christianity taught God as "the Father." In Jewish religion such a conception had not been held. God to them was "the God of our fathers." They were so far removed that he was not even God definitely to the common people. And even to their fathers, the prophets who had the Holy Ghost, he was not "the Father," but simply God. This one difference is what Christianity was founded on. As far as real morality is concerned, it was and always will be the same

among Jew and Gentile. No one can change moral law or make it better than that of the ten commandments. All we can contrive is a way to get people to be moral, upright, humane, loving. That was the scheme of Christianity. The method was to teach a personal, fatherly (and therefore loving) relationship between every man and God. By this means it was supposed that men would be better; become so moral, in fact, that the commandments would be naturally fulfilled in their dispositions without being held up as law. Whether or not the method of teaching this idea is a fallacy this was the whole idea. It had not been taught before.

Therefore "Our Father" is the very sign-word and gist of Christianity, the new doctrine. It is the doctrine itself. It was what it taught. Is it not? According to John, it is the Truth, the Word; the eternally true doctrine that existed even though men did not know it. What was the working of this new religion? It was the establishment in the heart of a new feeling; a feeling that could never have existed until God became "the Father." This was the Holy Ghost. The spirit that filled the minds of the old prophets was the spirit of prophecy. It was the Hebrew Holy Ghost. Now every man was to have a direct relation with God by the relation of love. In the time of Paul, the Hebrew idea of the Holy Ghost was still clung to with the fraud of miracles and a little futile sentimentality thrown in. At present, however, the Holy Ghost is merely a feeling of conversion. That is what it was getting to be in the fifteenth century. It was the third development of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, when the idea of "the Father" dwells in the mind it is the religion of

Truth, the Word that ever existed; and this having of "the Father" in the mind is what constitutes the Holy Ghost. "The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, these three are one." It is like saying, clothes, raiment and apparel are the same.

I could explain this at greater length or state it in a different way. It can be conceived more definitely by reading this chapter twice. If I should say, "The Father," the "Word" and the "Holy Ghost" are the same, (as expressions) it is evident, because to anyone who understands Christianity they are the same. What is the Word; the truth of this religion? It is the idea of "Our Father." What is this called? It is called the Holy Ghost. They are expressions for the same idea. To our minds, placing the expressions in quotation, as I have, makes the mystery simple. At the time this verse was forged, quotation-marks were not in use. There is not a quotation-mark in the Bible. It was the feeling of a necessity for conveying such distinctions as I have made that led to the adoption of quotation marks in "profane" literature. It makes all the difference in the world. How could this monk convey definitely his idea in a day when quotation was not used? This is why I say God never founded his human world on a book. A development in literary style could, at one shift, change the whole theology, to future minds. I believe that if quotation marks had been in vogue in this interpolator's time he would have used them. I do not believe the Bible, but I hope so for the sake of Christians who still cling to it. It would be a long step toward a rational, and therefore beautiful religion. I do not believe the Bible, but I believe it is an infidel's duty, when he can discover a more

beautiful meaning in the Bible, and prove it circumstantially, to do so for the benefit of his fellow men who are surely arriving at the stage when honesty with self will be the highest virtue—but who have not got there yet. It is a step toward the time when foolish mystery will give way to truth and beauty. It makes Christ a good man rather than a bungling God.

Why did not the interpolater say: “*God*, the Word and the Holy Ghost are one?” Because the Holy Ghost is not a thinking of “*God*.” *God* existed in the mind before Christ came. “The Father” did not exist in the mind then. Why did he not write: “The Father, the *Son* and the Holy Ghost are one”? Simply because Christ came to teach the idea, the Word, that *God* is a personal father of all. He did not become the son of *God* merely in order that after he was the *Son*, he could tell us he was the *Son*. The teaching was, “be ye sons of *God*.” He was the first of the fatherly conception. If we say the Father and the *Son* “are one,” and claim that thinking Christ to be the *Son* is the same as thinking *God* is the Father, there is no Holy Ghost then, because Christ is merely the son of *God* and *God* the father of Christ. It is merely a freak of Divinity; and where does humanity, the “feeling,” the Holy Ghost go?

Or take this theological curio as the theologians mean it. “The Father, the *Son* and the Holy Ghost” are one, because Christ is the Father and the Father is the *Son*. The Father is the *God* of the *Son* and the *Son* is the *God* of humanity, and they are both one *God*, and therefore *God* is our Father. Christ is not only the *Son* of *God* but he must be the *God* of the Father, being equal, and it is a

question where the Holy Ghost comes in. If the Holy Ghost is a feeling in the human heart, the only feeling in this case is a comic one. No wonder the theologians have it so twisted they think it a mystery.

This reasoner of the fifteenth century, who took a copy of the Bible and added to it to suit himself, was simply inserting an explanation to get rid of some figures of speech. He studied the matter. If this is not the case, and it was merely a new doctrine, why might it not have been put into Christ's mouth, or somewhere else in the Bible? The passage was put into the book that has more figures of speech for divinity than any other in the Bible.

It must have been put there to explain them.

The theologians seized upon it as a substantiation for their logical moonshine. Whether or not this thinker of the fifteenth century had the idea explained, the evidence is all in favor of the belief that he was trying to clear up a difficulty. Viewed in a rational light it certainly is a clearing up and it seems to have been done studiously. The writer did it by taking the matter from a human standpoint and studying John. If John said that God was in the beginning and the Word was with God, and this Word was God, why did not the man who wrote the verse in John also use the word God, instead of "Father?" He did it for the same reason that John, in writing about the beginning, did not use the word "Father." The "Word" that was with God in the beginning, was the Truth that he was "the Father," but as far as human religion was concerned, he was not "the Father," he was simply God. When this truth had come to pass, the man who wrote "the Father" in the Trinity verse did not use John's word, "God,"

because John was writing about the beginning, and he was writing from a present human standpoint. That is the only standpoint from which man can study God. That is why the interpolator got sense into his verse. It is the absence of this knowledge, and the inability to see Christ simply as a teacher, that some are unable to get as much beauty and truth out of their "inspired" dogma as an infidel can get out of history. They do not know exactly what the theory of Christianity is. Offer them a plain fact in the Bible and their Semitic deism will become so tangled with superstition that the result is a muddle and a mystery. Then they "canonize" it.

Creed has not only taken a forgery, printed it in the Bible as truth, and kept it from the minds of believers, but they have misunderstood it and perverted it. It is now not only "the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," but "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." The honest contemplation of this would wreck the mind of a Dante. What it will be next is hard to imagine. This is the result of trying to make Christ God instead of a teacher of God—a method of God working by natural means.

It is hoped that the explanation of this Trinity verse from an infidel point of view may give a new idea to Christians who have had difficulty with the Trinity. How much more beautiful the idea of God becomes when we understand the method by which "the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost" are the sign words for the new idea of God. John, of course, believed that Christ was the Son and is always with God. We see it in his writings. He says: "And if we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ." There is not a word in the Bible,

however, to back the Trinity-makers in the statement that Christ and the Holy Ghost are God. If Christ is God, then he was God, and if this was the case why did he not say so? Why was he the Son of God? Where does the Bible speak or hint at a "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," or state that three separate beings are one? Is there anything to excuse the creed-makers' lie?

There is only one manner in which this theological Trinity can be one. There is only one manner in nature in which three can be one. The Trinity is one by this method, and it is a fit reflection on a theological God. I will explain this method. The Christ or so-called God of this new sect of the year 30 was a Jew among Jews. Being human, his divinity had to be founded on the God of the Jews. Being human, in order to be divine he had to come from that God. The God of the Jews was an abstract, unknown Deity, of which there was no definite conception as an object of worship. As far as any idea of him was concerned, the Jews worshipped a nothing that Moses had given them. That was why they built an ark and a Holy of holies. Being idolaters, which they were at the time of Christ, and having a God who was nothing, they had to build a box with two gilt angels on it to carry nothing around on, so that they would know where it was. The theologians "God" in the Trinity is that same God. Then Christ, who is called God, came in human form. He furnished a conception, and this was an improvement. Christians are now supposed to worship Christ, the God as he is. As a matter of fact, as far as any conception of him is concerned they can only address him as he is pictured as a man. They say Christ was with God before he came.

He must have been a spirit then because he had to be born to be a man. That man is now dead. The holy St. Paul says that spiritual flesh is different from bodily. He certainly does not exist in the flesh now. Can anyone then conceive of Christ as he now is ; as he was before he came, the God to whom he prays ? Christians cannot worship Christ as a conception unless they worship back 1867 years. Therefore if they worship Christ as the present God, he is the same inconceivable now as the God of the Jews—nothing. The Holy Ghost is a feeling. Did any one ever pray to his Holy Ghost ? As far as being a definite God is concerned, it is nothing. Three nothings are nothing, one and equal.

IV.

HOW "FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY" ORIGINATED.

In the last verse of I. Cor. 12 St. Paul said "But covet earnestly the best gifts ; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." He has already told them the merits of striving to be a prophet, but he refers to something more honorable still. Commencing with the 13th Chapter we discover that this honorable trait is charity. This very word, thanks to modern benevolence and practical ways of showing the care of man for man, has become invested with all that is purest and noblest in the human heart. It is not mere words, sentiment and smiles, but self denial for a brother's benefit. That is what it is now.

It is not what St. Paul meant.

After saying that all the "gifts" were of no avail without charity he explains in verse 3 ; "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Giving to the poor was not charity with St. Paul. In fact it is likely that if they had offered goods to

feed the poor, St. Paul would have objected. The members of his church lived in practical socialism, giving all their spare earnings to the common church fund. When St. Peter was said to have struck Ananias and Sapphira dead by the Holy Ghost for keeping back part of the payment for the property they sold, it was the beginning of this system, and an awful warning to the church. That is, the story, at least, was an awful warning. St. Paul did the collecting and tended to the poor. They were "the poor saints at Jerusalem" that he frequently spoke of.

What does he mean by charity? "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Charity, it seems, embraces all the virtues under heaven, except that of giving something away. Charity, to him, was a lot of people who got along well and did not disrupt his organization; that did not behave itself unseemly to get Paul into trouble with the higher powers. This was a virtue he always insisted upon. Charity thinketh no evil of St. Paul's motives; rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth of what St. Paul tells them, and, in fact, "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" that St. Paul said, or did, or saddled on them. It was only necessary to remain in a state of placid ignorance, and not have a desire to possess what was your own. Charity was an inclusive virtue, embracing

everything desirable in a community where a priest did the advising and collecting.

Charity "believeth all things"—this is all that was necessary to say.

Can St. Paul's charity be palliated and put in a more beautiful light? Maybe St. Paul believed in giving, but insisted upon giving with the heart; maybe he dwelt on the aesthetic side. This is the only argument that could be offered.

It is unnecessary to explain that a man who gives his money to the poor sends his heart with it. If this were not the case, he would not be giving, but robbing himself. It is the recognition of this fact that has given the word "charity" its meaning. St. Paul makes a distinction between charity and giving. His being "kind" was merely a wallowing in sentiment. It was the glamour of all the wordy virtue with which he surrounded himself. That his "charity" had no basis to it except that of self, is proven in his ideas of caring for widows and children. In his letter to Timothy, a young bishop whom he ordained and put in charge of one of his churches after he had them well started, Paul gives rules for appointing elders, and among other things, regulating the membership of widows in the church. In I. Timothy, Chap. II., he says: "Honor widows who are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews let them learn first to shew piety at home and to requite their parents, for that is good and acceptable before God. But she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. And these

things give in charge that they may be blameless. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than infidel."

A "widow indeed" was a widow without children. This provision that no widows with children could join church is the most obscurely and discreetly put of any verse in Paul. Imagine a man explaining that a widow with children could not join church by saying "let them learn first to show piety at home and to requite their parents." A person would think he was talking about the children and nephews wishing to join the church and show piety. He does not mean, of course, that "any widow" should stay at home and requite "their parents." What St. Paul is complexly driving at is, that any widow with children or nephews cannot join church, and, moreover, if any children or nephews in the church have a widowed mother or aunt, they must support her outside of the church. She cannot get the benefit of the community of goods by joining.

In this light let us read this puzzle again and see how it straightens out. "If any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home and to requite their parents, for that is good and acceptable before God." That is, if any children or nephews have a widow whom they can't support, and she wishes to become a member and be aided by the church, let the children and nephews get out of church and take care of her themselves. That is the meaning; and it is shown further by the statement that any member who cannot take care of his own

widows is worse than an infidel. It is well that an infidel is not as bad off in faith as an unfortunate orphan.

What, then, is a widow indeed? She is a widow without young children. A widow with children or poor children with a widow are excluded. It would seem, then, that all childless widows or widowless children could join. No. For verse 9 says: "Let not a widow be taken into the number under three score (60) years old, having been the wife of one man." This would seem a humane provision, but there is a limitation to it, for the next verse says she must be "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."

In short, no widow can join church until she is 60 years of age, and not then, unless her children are raised. She must have a reputation for entertaining strangers, for this would argue that she had a house in order to be able to do it. She must have a reputation for washing the saints' feet, for it would then furnish a good place for the "saints" to put up and be waited on and not be bothered with babies. She must be sixty years of age and have had only one husband, for this would mean that her children were grown, and being so pious and aged, she would soon die and leave it all to the church, as she would have no dependent babies to require her legacy. This is the only widow who could get "charity" out of the church.

Why did not Paul state it in the first place, without making such a quibble about nephews and children and their "piety," which, in the end, has nothing to do with it? What was troubling Paul was the children in church

who might become unable to support their mothers, and how Paul could immediately get rid of the whole lot. Study the fourth verse, fifth chapter of I. Timothy, and see a hypocritically twisted sentence that is a prototype of Paul's fourteen books.

That is why he warns Timothy, in the seventh verse : "And these things give in charge, that they (the doctrines) may be blameless." This is instructing him to put these damnable principles in such a disguised doctrinal way that the motive will not appear. That is why he tells Timothy that the reason a widow indeed can be received is because she prays more. And a widow whose children or nephews cannot support her, lives in "the pleasures" of children and is "dead while she liveth," so she cannot be taken in, and the children must get out for they have a new field for piety. She is divinely damned. These were the "blameless" reasons to be given to the church by Timothy. It is certainly a boon to be an infidel to such a book and be able to tell the truth.

Verse 16.—"If any man or woman that believeth have widows let them relieve them and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." Why would a "widow indeed," who had a reputation for entertaining strangers, need relief? This was the result of Paul's solicitude for the yearly dividends. This was what made the church wealthy. It was education taking advantage of superstition and ignorance, impelled by the lowest motives of which the human heart is capable that built the holy altar and the restful wine cellar.

St. Paul says, in verse 14: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house,

give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully, for some are already turned aside after Satan." For a long time St. Paul taught them to live in community and not marry. So many of them turned aside after Satan, and there was so much for the adversary to notice that he gave women the priestly privilege of bearing children.

Perhaps he thought he might as well.

Modern ecclesiasts say that the church is not to be judged because in the course of the middle ages it "became corrupt." If this stuff was written in the year 57 the religion was rotten when it started. They now claim this is inspired.

This is the "charity" which pollutes Paul's mind in I. Cor. 13. And he ends up: "And now abideth, faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." St. Paul usually preached "faith" as the one great end. To the Corinthians this was not necessary. They had faith in plenty, but the trouble was to get them to agree and be decent. Ignorance and "faith" go together.

* * * *

In the light of this can we believe the Corinthians were quite so depraved in their eating as Paul would like to have made them believe he had heard? Was it not his real motive to do away with the drawing on the church funds to feed the people? Why were they so voracious? Must they not have been hungry? We learn in the early part of Acts that the Greeks complained because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Paul or Luke only told the incident to found a new system of

service. We do not know whether it was the truth or not. It would, of course, be a good argument against the system upon which Christianity was founded; but I do not believe anything Paul says, whether the evidence is for or against the church. There may have been truth in it. All we can believe is that these epistles were written. There would be little object in forging them in entirety. I believe them genuine. They are lies. They were lies to the church and are a warning to us.

Maybe these Corinthians were hungry. They were told to give all they could to the church. Their blessedness rested upon it. Their voraciousness must have been hunger. And Paul's argument that the etiquette, the depravity, did not suit him, is only one of his arguments by which he makes his real motives so "blameless."

V.

WHO WROTE REVELATION ?

Who wrote Revelation ? is one of the stock mysteries of the church. Who St. John the Divine was is a mystery unfathomed.

Some choose to believe this St. John the Divine was St. John the Apostle. Some have claimed it was a second John who ministered in Proconsular Asia. Luther did not believe it was St. John the Apostle. Those who contend it was John the Apostle quote "tradition" for their authority. Dionysius of Alexandria, who lived A. D. 240, and who is said to have been the ablest bishop of his time, testified that the writers before him repudiated Revelation as a forgery of Cerinthus (whoever he was). The book was written by some one who had received the Revelation on the Isle of Patmos. Some say it was written on the Isle of Patmos. Others say the writer was at Ephesus, where Paul's doctrines had been founded, and that he merely refers to having been on the Isle of Patmos when he received the revelation. This idea is based on the ninth verse of Chap. I, where the writer says he "was in the Isle that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the

testimony of Jesus Christ." If it had been written then, the writer would most likely have said, "am in the Isle which is called Patmos," etc. He would not have written in the past tense.

Dionysius, the learned Christian bishop, also said, A. D. 240, that it was not known in his day that St. John the Apostle had ever been in the Isle of Patmos. It was on this testimony that Luther based his opinions. Taking all this from Christian books, it can be seen that the church does not know who wrote Revelation. St. John the Divine is merely a name for a mystery. Most Christians choose to believe it was St. John the Apostle. They believe it because they do not know. The preachers believe it simply because they believe it. They tell the congregation St. John the Apostle wrote it. None of them seem to study the question much. They merely assume the belief.

Those who believe it found their faith on "tradition." What is tradition ?

Tradition tells us that St. James the Less, in the ninety-sixth year of his age, was thrown from a pinnacle of a temple by the Jews, and landing in the court below. "but not being killed on the spot," he arose and offered a beautiful prayer to heaven for his persecutors. "But malice is too diabolical to be satisfied with kindness," says tradition, so they poured a shower of stones upon him while he kept offering his prayer to heaven, "and imploring forgiveness at the throne of grace." Not killing the aged St. James the Less in this manner, they at last extirpated him with a fuller's club. As tradition does not say that he arose from his knees, we must conclude that he was at last "killed on the spot."

Tradition tells us that the Romans got up a special kind of cross to crucify Andrew. Incidentally they furnished an extra emblem for the church.

Tradition tells us that St. James the Great was tried and condemned to be beheaded. It is said that the officer who had charge of him was converted at the last moment, so another officer was found, and St. James and the first officer were beheaded together. The first officer was probably tried "on the spot."

Tradition tells us it does not know how St. Matthew was killed but opines he was slain with a halbert.

Tradition tells us that St. Thomas first received a shower of darts and was then killed with a spear.

Tradition tells us that St. Mark founded a very successful church in Alexandria, Egypt, "where he preached with the greatest freedom." For some reason the Egyptians suddenly changed their minds, and taking him from church during the day, they dragged him over the most rocky places until night, and left him on a precipice near the sea. That night Christ appeared and comforted him so that he kept alive. The next morning the Egyptians returned and dragged him again and then burned him. Tradition tells, also, that his "remains" were later removed to Venice, and he is, therefore, the tutelary saint of the city.

Tradition tells us that St. Ignatius was eaten up by lions in the amphitheater. "A few bones only were left which were collected by his deacons and carried back to Antioch."

Tradition tells us that the Romans tried to burn Polycarp, but that the wind blew the flames aside and they

had to kill him with a spear. Afterward the centurion burned the body, and "the few bones remaining, more precious than gold and jewels to his affectionate church, were gathered and buried."

Tradition tells us that Peter was fleeing from Rome to escape Nero, and was met at the city gate by Christ (thirty-four years after the crucifixion). Peter, it seems, did not ask Christ where he came from, but "whither he was going," and Christ said: "To Rome, to be crucified the second time." This is given in tradition as divine sarcasm, for Peter was so humiliated that he went back to Rome, and when brought to the cross, insisted on being crucified upside down. This is all taken from Fleetwood, a Scotchman, who wrote the life of Christ, and says he avoided all "apocryphal" tradition. There are volumes of "tradition" in existence.

Tradition had a fertile ingenuity in ways of killing people and laying it all on the Romans. Tradition knew that a church with a belief founded on the blood of martyrs would beget a bloody mind to uphold the church; it furnished the food for fanaticism by merely writing in a book. Tradition had nearly all the martyrs live to the age of ninety odd years and made them all tough so that they could furnish more horror for tradition.

Tradition even knows the last addresses they made. Here is St. Andrew's address to his cross: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it and adorned with his members as so many inestimable jewels. I therefore come joyfully and triumphing to it, that it may receive me as a disciple and follower of him and be the

means of carrying me safe to my Master, being the instrument on which he redeemed me."

Tradition has written scintillating and jeweled compound sentences for the saints that sound as though they were all composed by the same student of Latin stems.

Tradition has furnished an appearance of "our Lady" at any spot where it was desired to found an institution or consecrate a medicinal spring.

Tradition has furnished enough holy bones to make a trinity of every saint. But tradition is going out of style. People who study something of the methods of killing used by the Romans and their warlike motives know that tradition and its martyrdoms long drawn out is only a product of the same ghoulish cowardice that constructed the rack and the flesh pincers for heretics in the middle ages, and founded Spanish institutes of conversion that looked like the patent offices of hell.

Tradition has furnished the church with the skulls of the three wise men of the East and put them in a shrine at Cologne. No doubt they are the skulls according to faith. If faith can move mountains, all that would be necessary would be to procure three skulls and believe powerfully they were the ones and they would be. Transubstantiation would do it.

It was tradition that once made St. John the Apostle the author of Revelation. Here is how tradition operates.

The book of St. John speaks of the Isle of Patmos. No one knew he was ever on the Isle of Patmos. But the book was written by St. John, and it speaks of Patmos, "a desert isle;" so St. John must have been there. It was surmised he was banished there. This became tra-

dition. The theory is that of Eusebius, who was then quoted as authority on the subject. Tradition kept on growing. If John was banished to the Isle of Patmos there must have been a reason. They say St. John was spiritual adviser of the seven churches of Proconsular Asia. What St. Paul, who seems to be running all these things during the life of John, was doing with himself, they do not explain. John, however, was banished to the Isle of Patmos. Tradition kept on growing. Tradition, in the course of time, canonized saints and furnished a special kind of horrible death and a beautiful address for each one. The Romans and Jews were all to blame. Now, when every saint had been beautifully butchered, and history had been created by tradition, it became rather tame and incredulous to say that St. John was banished to the Isle of Patmos by the Romans. Why should the people that dragged all the other saints to spectacular horror, treat a Galilee fisherman to political exile in the Aegean sea by order of the Emperor who had the world on his hands? Read profane history and you will discover that religion was the one point in which the Romans were not prejudiced. They were warriors. They killed captives of war. They were a nation of virile manhood. They thought so little of gods that they judged each one by the size of its clientage; they took a political view. They did not interfere with the Greek mythology and try to substitute the Roman. They did not try to do away with the Jewish god or make converts of the Jews by the crucifix and the beheading ax and the halbert and the pyre. The Jews may have hit a saint with a fuller's club, but the real horrors were the invention of the Christians when bigotry

came to the throne. Why should a nation that had a dozen religions under its control and interfered with none have such a ghoulish care for an obscure sect, who were taught by St. James himself to "honor the king," and were taught by their hypocritical leader, St. Paul, that all royal power was of divine origin? Why should the Romans let each saint struggle along to the ripe old age of ninety-some years and then start the methods of the inquisition?

However, tradition says they did, and so the story that they banished John became rather incredible. So tradition got St. John into banishment in the following manner: It said John was "spiritual adviser" of some churches in Proconsular Asia, and Domitian, the Roman proconsul, sent him to Rome, where he was put into a cauldron of boiling oil. "But the Almighty restrained the heat, as he did in the fiery furnace of old, and delivered him from his seemingly unavoidable destruction." This, however, did not seem to be a hint to Domitian that John was "divine," so he was banished to the Isle of Patmos.

Tradition managed to get him safely and consistently on the Isle of Patmos, and furnish the horror, too. The Romans sent him there because they could not kill him. They were baffled. That accounted for it. They do not tell us how these butchers and burners and boilers became so lenient as to let St. John get off the desert Isle of Patmos to deliver his documents to the church at Ephesus. But tradition is becoming quite unfashionable. It is only quoted now when a professor can find one that is not ridiculous in the light of history, to brace up a sagging doctrine. They broke away from the Catholics but took a few "traditions" along. They have been dropping them

by the way. The ones who believe there is brimstone in hell and topaz in heaven ; to whom Tophet is a holocaust of the good that die too young, and Paradise a miser's dream, still cling to tradition. Those who are being refined by free minded men are still trying to save a few "traditions." They cling to Polycarp, and extract platitudes and circumlocution from "higher education" and mix them up and use tradition to bolster the Bible ; to save the apostles, the epistles and "John's" handbook of hell. The tradition of John's banishment, however, is now dropped. They became ashamed of it. So now they do not know who wrote Revelation. It is a "mystery." They say St. John wrote it, but have no reasons outside of tradition. They theorize. Therefore outsiders may theorize. If an unbeliever can say who wrote Revelation and can give reasons, he has more authority than the doctrinists.

Revelation was the result of the same personality that is in the fourteen Epistles, the book of Acts and the book of Luke—Paul. That the same man who wrote the epistles helped or directed the man who wrote Luke and Acts is the evidence of the church. How they know, I do not know. I base my opinion on a study of the books. St. Paul, whoever he was, also wrote Revelation. Here are my reasons for saying so :

First reason—The peculiarity of St. Paul was "revelation." A careful reading of the Bible shows it to be his strong point in upholding and governing his church. These books have a method of Revelation markedly different from anything else in the Bible—simultaneous or double barreled revelation ; such an improvement on ordinary revelation that it at once calls our attention. There are just three

instances of it. St. Paul, we read in Acts, was on the road to Damascus. A light shone from heaven and a voice called to Paul: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said: "Who art thou, Lord?" And the Lord said: "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." The men who were with Paul are said to have heard the voice. Saul lay on the ground; and getting up, he said he was blind, and had the men lead him to Damascus. He was for three days without food or drink. Then the angel of the Lord appeared to a man in Damascus named Ananias, and revealed to him that Saul had had a revelation and was blind, and also revealed to him that Saul had had a vision or revelation that Ananias would come to cure him. The angel of the Lord told Ananias the street in which Paul (Saul) lived and told Ananias to go and cure him. The Lord and Ananias also had quite a chat about Paul's characteristics as a persecutor and his call to the new religion. This was evidently put in by Paul when he told the story to Luke for the purpose of impressing the reader with Paul's strong character. It was his recommendation from the mouth of God.

The next instance of this kind of Revelation is that given to Peter in the early part of his ministry. This is the first instance: A vision appeared to a man named Cornelius at Cesarea. Peter was at that time traveling, and was in Joppa. The vision appeared to Cornelius, and he said: "What is it, Lord? And he said unto him: Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa and call for one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside; he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." So Cornelius sent his men.

As they approached the house in Joppa the next day, Peter went up on the housetop to eat, but fell asleep and saw a vision of a sheet full of unclean beasts lowered three times. The Lord told Peter to eat, but Peter, being a Jew, refused to eat what was considered unclean. And the Lord said: "What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common." It was then revealed to Peter in a secondary revelation that there were men at the door for him and he was instructed to go with them. Peter went with them, and of course discovered that God had recognized a man who was not a Jew, Cornelius, in a revelation. Peter then said: "Ye know now that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Cornelius, not being a Jew and one that was therefore unclean to Peter told his story that God had sent for Peter to tell Cornelius the gospel. While Peter told the gospel, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision (the Jews) which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost."

What, you might well ask, has this to do with Paul? It has this to do with him: Peter, who followed Christ, and Paul, who was converted, they say, five years after Christ's death, held opposite doctrines. Peter preached only to Jews, and claimed that in order to be a Christian it was necessary to be circumcised; that is, to be a Jew who received Christ. Paul said that when he was converted, five years after the crucifixion, it was revealed to him that salvation was intended for Gentiles also. By reading the

Bible we discover that when Peter came to visit Paul's church, at Antioch, twenty-two years after Christ's death, he refused to eat or associate with the Gentiles. This we discover through Paul's boasting to his Galatians how he rebuked Peter for his doctrines. He called Peter and Barnabas dissemblers. What Peter came to Antioch for, unless it was to protest, we can not know. Barnabas, however, Paul's companion, acknowledged Peter's action by copying him. They would now have us believe that Peter and Paul held the same doctrines; that Peter and James preached to the Jews and were at the head of the branch of the church that was "of the circumcision," while Paul preached to Gentiles. But both, they say, were of the same church. Now, if Peter followed Christ and was specially instructed by him, why was it necessary to give him a revelation in the early part of his ministry, teaching him the main point of the doctrine? And if Peter was given this revelation, why did he, twenty-two years after Christ's death, still refuse to eat with Gentiles? He would be a peculiar kind of "rock" on which to found a church, would he not? The fact is that Paul, who carried out his conversion five years after Christ, kept away from Jerusalem where all the trouble was; and being a Roman by birth, a Jew by descent, a Pharisee by training, and a Greek by accomplishment; having political protection, religious prestige, and influence with the Greeks, saw his field to start a church among the Gentiles.

He boasts to the Galatians that for seventeen years after he was converted he was not intimate with the apostles at Jerusalem. He states this to prove that he did not get his doctrine from them, but received his know-

ledge of uncircumcision by "revelation of Jesus Christ." If Christ came to earth and selected apostles for the sake of keeping them near him to learn his teachings, why was it necessary to reveal a new doctrine to a young man, years after? The fact is that Paul preached a different doctrine from that of the chief apostle of Christ. He got it up. In order to found this doctrine on Christ, he had Christ appear specially to him "as one born out of time." An "apostle" was one who was with Christ during his life time. Paul, as the head of his church, had to be an apostle, so he became an apostle by revelation. That is how he became the Apostle Paul. There is nothing to show that Peter ever acknowledged Paul's doctrines except Paul's saying so. At least Peter did not live up to the acknowledgment. Paul's ministry was a continual contention with the preachers who acknowledged Christ according to the leadership of Peter and James, and who entered Paul's churches and told the people that Paul was teaching falsehood. This we see in the epistles.

The book of Acts was written largely to deal with the history of Paul's life. They say it was written about A. D. 63. If Peter was the eldest of the apostles during Christ's life, and Paul was a "young man" five years after his death, and this book is a history of Paul's accomplished ministry, Peter was either dead or in a state of harmless senility; he was in a ripe old age. There is no knowing what had become of him. Paul, having been successful, as might be judged by his methods, no doubt told Luke the "tradition" of what the Lord had revealed to Peter in his early career. Paul probably did not know that the ignorant church would canonize the private epistles he had

written to his churches and leave evidence that Peter did not follow the teachings of the revelation. Acts, being written as a final history, Paul takes the opportunity to have the vision of Peter in it, and thus finally found his own doctrines on the "rock" of Christ. If this revelation ever actually occurred, Peter's ministry was a living lie. It was at least a living refutation of Paul's "revealed" doctrine. What Christ came to earth for cannot, then, be explained. The church is founded on Paul the revelator and not Peter the rock. The revelation founded it.

The other instance of this manner of revelation is that of Zacharias. The Lord's angel revealed to Zacharias that he would have a son. The angel also revealed to Mary that she would have a son, and revealed to Mary that it had also been given to Elizabeth to have a son. So Mary went and visited Elizabeth. These are the only three instances of double barreled revelation. They are in the books that the church itself recognizes as being written under Paul's influence. They are a peculiar improvement in revelation. They are the natural invention of an educated and sophistic Pharisee who took hold of a church founded by fishermen and went them one better.

One double barreled revelation surrounds Paul's conversion. One substantiates his new doctrine. One adds to the divinity of Christ and is what makes the book of Luke, which, "tradition" says that Paul called "my gospel," an improvement on the others. Paul knew where he was putting them.

The ones surrounding Paul's divine call and Christ's divinity each consist of two principal and a subordinate revelation, and a miracle depriving a man of one of his

senses. The one surrounding the divinity of Christ consists of two principal and a subordinate revelation. They are the product of one mind,—the mind which they concerned most,—a Pharisee, the founder of the Christian church. They occur in the three points of cardinal importance to Paul. Paul used his improved revelation significantly; sparingly. Besides his double barreled revelations and his revealed doctrine and his special vision of Christ, Paul is the only one who says that Christ appeared to five hundred at once. The others tell different stories of Christ's appearance to the apostles. They know nothing of this principal appearance. Paul told it to his ignorant church, who had no means of finding out. All this shows that Paul was particularly strong on revelation.

Second reason—The epistles, Acts and Revelation, allowing for the different natures of the subjects, are in the same literary style. They are full of "Lo" and "Behold." This is characteristic of these books.

Third reason—It is a peculiarity of Paul's method in his epistles that before he chastises the church or offers advice, he gives a flattering prelude to please their vanity. This is characteristic of the admonitions to each of the seven churches in the book of Revelation. He praises them and warns them against certain members; he flatters one church on its resistance to the Nicolaitans, a sect that opposed Paul's revealed "doctrines," and admonishes the rich church to buy treasures in heaven. This commodity, no doubt, could be obtained from Paul. All this, of course, is supposed to be the address of Christ. Each admonition

is preceded by flattery. Revelation has the same characteristics as the epistles written by Paul.

Fourth reason—In the sixth chapter of II. Corinthians, Paul indulges in what he calls glorying, and at the same time humbly rebuking himself for glorying and then glorying some more. Then beginning in the twelfth chapter he suddenly breaks in, and says: “It is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth.) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter. Of such a one will I glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth; but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth me, and lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me.” Then Paul goes on to talk of other matters.

Imagine a man sitting down and writing a letter to his church and purposely letting them into the secret that he knew the secret of heaven as if he were going to tell it, and suddenly saying “yet I forbear.” If he intended to tell them and changed his mind, why did he not cast aside

the small piece of parchment and not send it? There is motive in such things. Paul was not the passive weather-cock of emotion he would have them believe. He lets them know he is possessed of the secrets of Paradise and forbears because, forsooth, he is so humble he fears they will look up to him too much. He sends them this written slip of the tongue. And what more is necessary? It is worse vanity than if he told them the revelation. They know now that he knows the secrets of heaven, and withal he gets credit for superhuman humility. He says the revelation was given him to be a thorn in the flesh; to try him; no doubt to purify his soul, and exhibit to the churches how strong he was. Before this, he had been scoring the preachers who seemed at last to be getting a strong influence over his Corinthians. When his argument is at an end he winds up with the revelation surprise. The other preachers would have no show after that.

Now, this method of saying you know something and then forbearing, is characteristic. Not every one would think of it. Let us observe Revelation.

In the tenth chapter, when the seven thunders had uttered their voices and John or Paul was about to write it, he says he "heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." Why should Christ give a revelation to a man to have it written down for humanity, and in bringing about the heavenly panorama, why should he have seven thunders utter their voices merely for the purpose of telling Paul or John not to write them down? What would be God's object? Of course John or Paul would be into the secret. This corresponds with Paul's methods, does it

not? On the theory that St. Paul wrote Revelation, and had it in mind when he wrote his epistles, does it not corroborate his statement that he knew certain things that were "unlawful" to speak. It justifies him in writing the rest. Why is Revelation said to be written by St. John "the Divine" instead of "the Apostle"? Because Paul claimed that he did not know whether the man he saw was in the flesh or out of the flesh. He puts it in parenthesis twice. Was this Revelation written by John the Apostle? No; because it has an introduction speaking of this author in the third person. If some one else wrote the introduction, some one else probably wrote the Revelation. That somebody took down what John, who was in the flesh or out of the flesh, gave to somebody in a "trance." Revelation and Luke alone have introductions. This is the result of the same personality. Why did not Paul put his name to it? Because he was so humble, and moreover, it was more effective in straightening out the difficulties in his seven churches to have the Revelation come from Christ through an intermediate, rather than as a dream of Paul, the party concerned. It is the revelation *of* St. John. Why did not the translators and canonizers make it the revelation *to* St. John, if it was to him? They must have had theories about it. Why did Paul put that queer and falsely unintentional reference in his letter to the Corinthians and send it with no seeming object? Because he had it in his mind to write Revelation. When he got Revelation finished he prefixed a lot of threats and timely admonitions to the seven churches, fixed it up to suit his accidental reference then lying in the hands of the Corinthians, and gave it as the message of Christ through St. John, "the divine." Paul was so hum-

ble. The book of Revelation is largely a travesty on the Roman Empire. It might not have been policy to have his name to it. The churches would know however. They would guess at it and discern Paul's greatness through the epistle.

Fifth reason—It has been said even by Christians, that the man who wrote Revelation was either inspired or crazy. Paul was not exactly sane. It is only necessary to read the 8th, 9th and 10th chapters I. Corinthians to see that. In the 8th chapter he commences to lay down the theory of eating meat offered to idols, and gets into a deep philosophical argument. Then he suddenly exclaims, "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ [our Lord? Are ye not my work in the Lord?" What is the occasion of all this? He suddenly starts to tell them he has as much right to stop work, he and Barnabas, and live on the church and to "lead about a sister, a wife," as Peter has. It must have suddenly occurred to his mind that they had questioned him about this. He gives them warm argument upon it for over a chapter and in the last part of the next chapter, he takes up his argument on idols meat and finishes. Read those chapters, remembering that the breaking into chapters is a work of the compilers. Regard it as a continuous letter by Paul and one of two things is evident. After he had gotten into strange and sentimental argument on brotherly love, in his meat philosophy, he decides it would then be allowable to indulge in some execration to justify himself in other matters. It would be taken well, because he had gotten them at this point into a spirit of compassion. Afterward he becomes as humble as ever, and tells what he started to say. Paul

was either crazy, or devilishly deceitful. You can read his epistles and see the law of action and reaction, like the alternating moods of emotional madness. To say he was crazy is only putting the most charitable construction upon the Epistles and Revelation.

Sixth reason—St. John is held up to us as a model of mildness—the “beloved apostle.” His book is certainly the mildest of all. His literary style argues his character. And yet, men who make a pretense of the ability of literary analysis; who study Shakespere and find hidden beauties in Browning, and pretend to know literary science as some men know a good horse; who have all the stock adjectives of literary criticism and dilletante writing at tongue’s end, tell us that this mild man wrote the diabolical vindictiveness called Revelation. It would seem impossible.

Eighth reason—All these reasons may not be conclusive. The church assumes that John wrote Revelation and does not know a reason. I believe Paul wrote it and know a few reasons. These reasons alone would not make me decided however, if it were not for a stronger one. For many hundred years the church has been arguing about the authorship of Revelation. They want to tell. Now there are points in the bible offering one theory of who wrote it. There is a man who says he knew all that could be put in such a book. He knew more. He was acquainted with all that was necessary to write Revelation, and said so. Now Revelation is written and is “inspired.” Therefore its secrets are lawful. The “unlawful” part in a divine sense is suppressed. If Paul knew this, and it was “lawful,” as is proven, then it was not only his privilege but his duty to write it. Among all the theories

as to who wrote Revelation there is one that offers itself like a sign post. A man could discover it in a week. And preachers who pore a life out over it's pages and commentaries containing arguments much farther fetched than this theory would be, do not refer to it. St. Paul wrote most of the New Testament. Why? Not because the others did not write, but because the councils that compiled the Bible selected his writings. They liked them. His spirit, false logic, and general method appealed to the founders of the dark ages. The church does not want to discover that St. Paul wrote Revelation. St. Paul wrote : I. Corinthians, II. Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I. Thessalonians, II. Thessalonians, I. Timothy, II. Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews. He superintended Acts and Luke. Mark was the servant of his co-worker Barnabas. If it were admitted that St. Paul wrote Revelation, there would not be much left.

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